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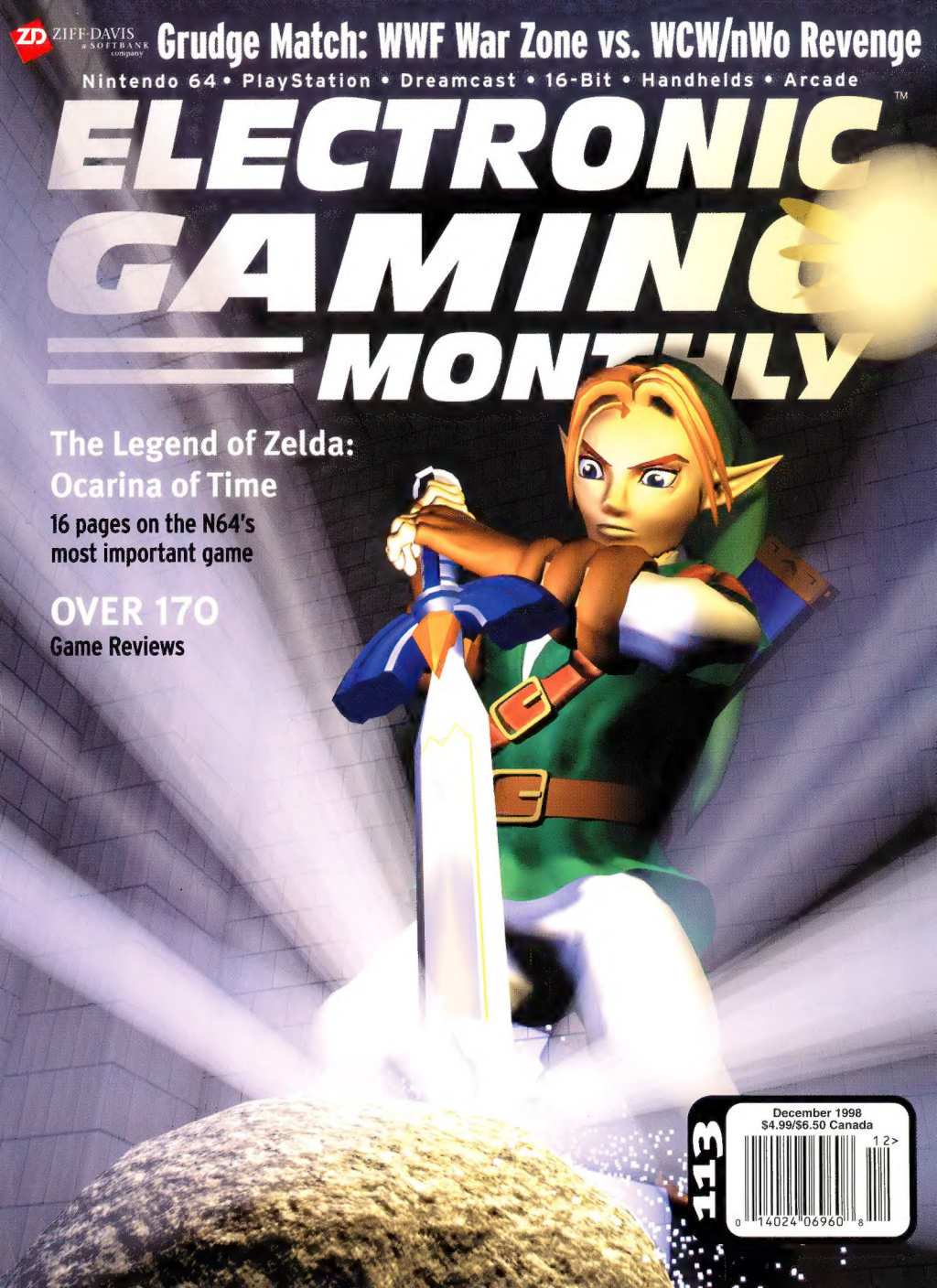

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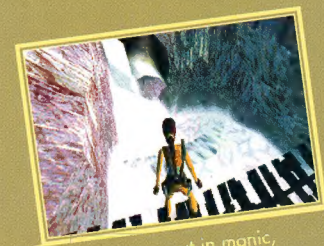

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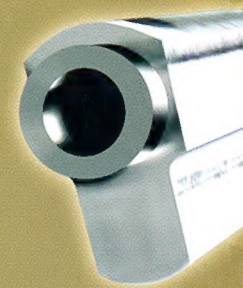

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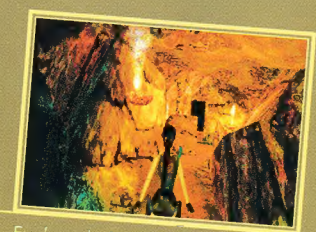

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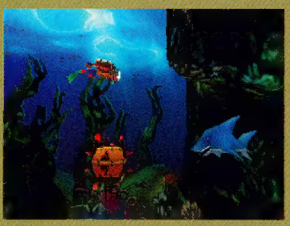

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ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY
Number 11.12
December 1998
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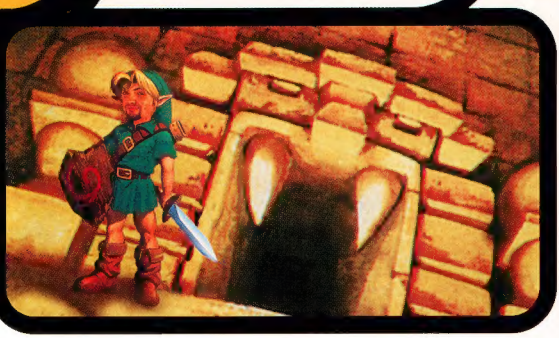
Does it get any better than this?

By John Davison • john_davison@zd.com



The movie industry has its "event movies"—the *Star Wars*, *Star Treks* and *Titanics*—and now it seems that the games industry has true "event games."

This month we have been lucky enough to extensively play the "big two" games for this holiday season—Metal Gear Solid on the PlayStaton and Zelda on the N64. And while all this was going on, we also got some hands-on time with the "next big thing" over in Japan...namely the first batch of Dreamcast games; including a perfect version of Virtua Fighter 3. It is indeed a good time for videogames. All of these titles are of such incredible quality that they significantly shift the proverbial goal posts within the context of our whole genre of entertainment. Howard Lincoln has been recently (and somewhat bizarrely, if taken out of context) quoted referring to Zelda as the *Gone With the Wind* of gaming. It may seem like an odd simile to make, but he has a point. Zelda will probably be responsible for a significant change in fortunes for the N64. As for Metal Gear, well...what can we say? It's practically the perfect entertainment experience—and not only does it put pretty much all other PlayStation titles to shame, it also has a crack at outperforming a lot of action movies in terms of both scripting and spectacle. As for the Dreamcast stuff...we'd all like arcade-perfect versions of Rally 2 and VF3 along with other games that all look better than most 3D-accelerated PC titles wouldn't we?

"Now more than ever there's less and less of an excuse for games to be released that are nothing more than regurgitated 3D crap. There's an awful lot of it around, and in the holiday madness ensuing at the moment you can't help but wonder at the creative justification for some of the trash that's being peddled."

So what does this mean for us? Well, the bar has just been raised. Now more than ever there's less and less of an excuse for games to be released that are nothing more than regurgitated 3D crap. There's an awful lot of it around, and in the holiday madness ensuing at the moment you can't help but wonder at the creative justification for some of the trash that's being peddled. Check out this month's Review Crew section and you'll notice a definite "line" of quality. On one side there are some glorious examples of creative genius, while on the other we find yet more pathetic excuses of 3D, brown-textured rubbish with no entertainment value whatsoever. Don't get fooled by these this Christmas.

There are a number of exquisite "must-buy" games that will be responsible for making life better for everyone. Check them out. Just wait until next year and there'll be games appearing that push the existing systems to the limits. Developers will be trying to outdo Metal Gear's graphical splendor, Zelda's undeniably thoughtful design, while at the same time trying to convince the PlayStation and the N64 to do Dreamcast-like tricks. Remember how good SNES games got when PlayStation and Saturn were announced? Anticipate the same kind of jump in the next six months.

For the time being, things haven't often been as good as they are now. Enjoy.

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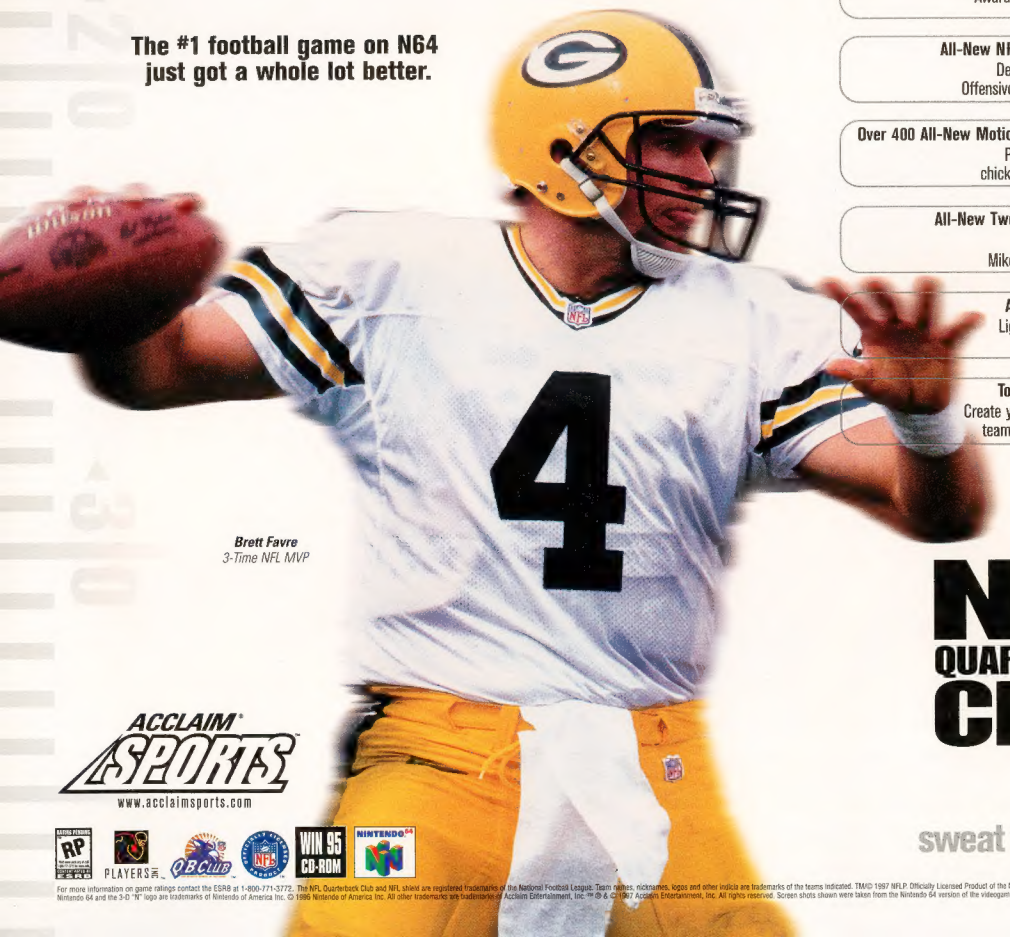
The #1 football game on N64 just got a whole lot better.



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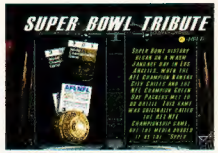

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APTITUDE TEST

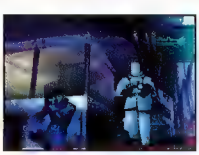
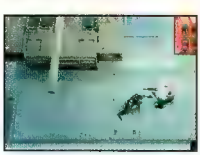
1 Which one is not a covert operative?

a] b] c] d]

2 Which is best when infiltrating an enemy stronghold?

a] b] c] d]

3 High testosterone levels can be detrimental in which scenario?

a]  b]  c]

4 Divulge critical information only when being tortured with a _____.

a] b] c] d]

He's the president of Armstech. And the biggest S.O.B. in the world. **2. b.** Every Special Forces soldier knows cardboard boxes make excellent hiding places. "Dig-dig-dig-dig" Research shows that the male hormone is a liability in most life-and-death scenarios. Sorry, fellas. **4.** None of the above. The enemy better not get so much as medieval cruelty they've cooked up. **5.** True. After three years of development, critics are hailing Metal Gear Solid as the best game of the year. End of story. **6. c.** One walking battle tank and you'll be quaking in your gen-x poser boots. **7. d.** Playing Metal Gear Solid may cause all sorts of irritating physiological side effects. Reread belief. PlayStation consoles and tactical espionage games only cause meltdowns in college sociology classes. (Of course, broccoli can make some of us a bit gassy.)

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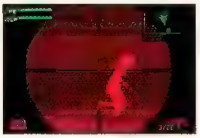
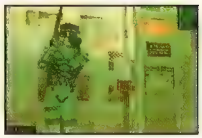
5 Critics are hailing Metal Gear Solid as the best game of the year.

True ☐ 

True ☐ 

6 Which one will make your worthless civilian life flash before your eyes?

a]

b]

c]

d]

7 Sweaty palms and rapid heart rate are symptoms of _____.

a]

b]

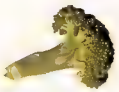
c]

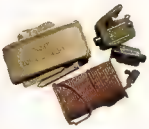
d]

8 Which one could create a 30-megaton "incident"?

a]

b]

c] 

d] 

Answers 1 D Kenneth Baker is no stinkin' spy. oxen!free and get shot in the head." 2 Both are an "ouch" out of you wussies, no matter what encounter with a Metal Gear nuclear-equipped explanation for answer 5. 3 D Despite popular

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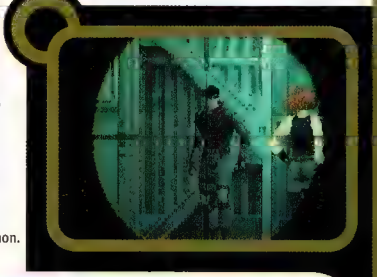

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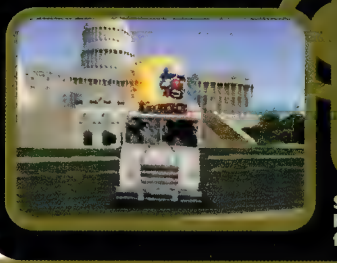

Sweet Tooth is back and he's pissed. See page 108 for the preview of TM3.

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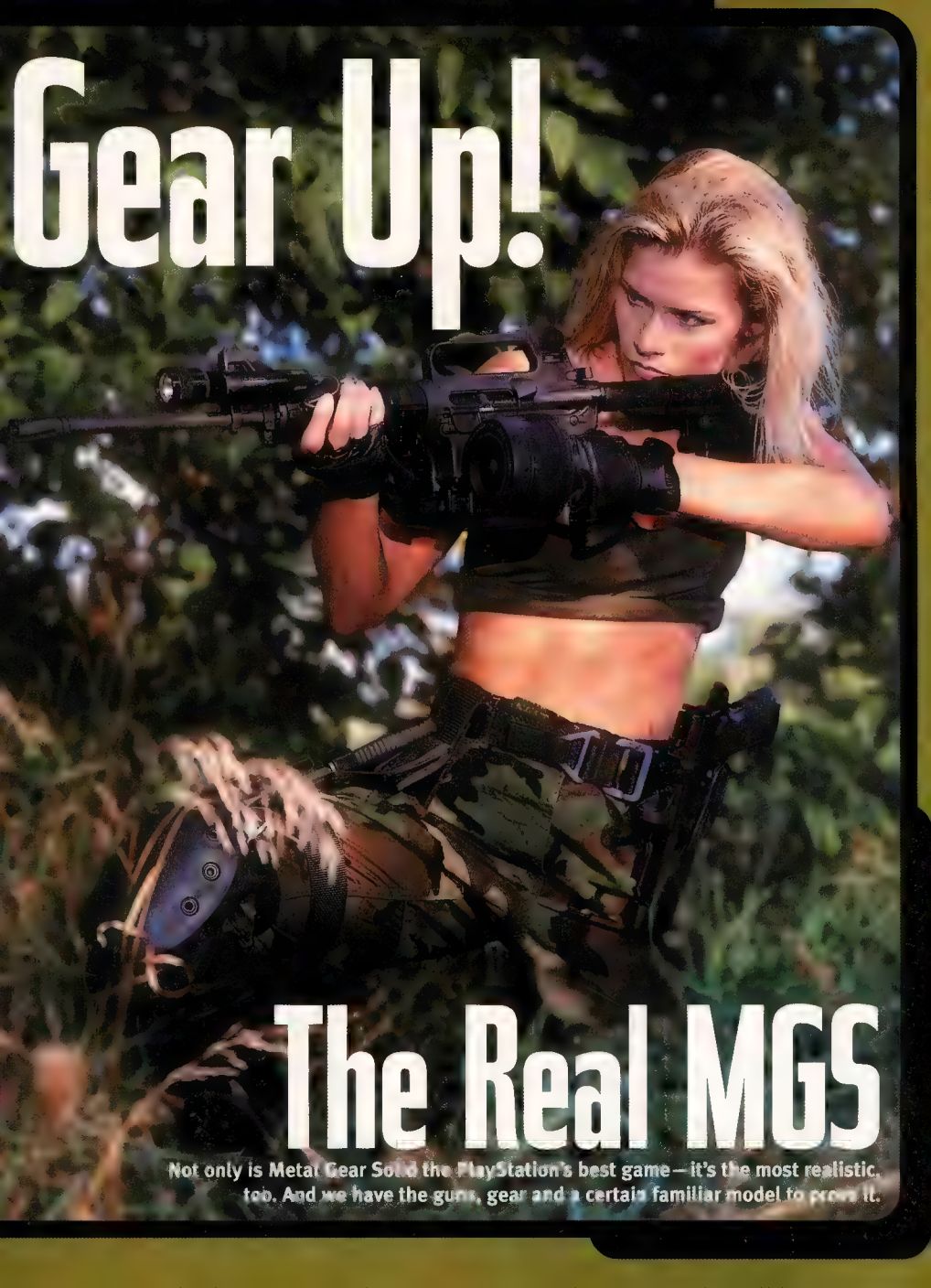

Gear Up!

The Real MGS

Not only is Metal Gear Solid the PlayStation's best game—it's the most realistic, too. And we have the guns, gear and a certain familiar model to prove it.

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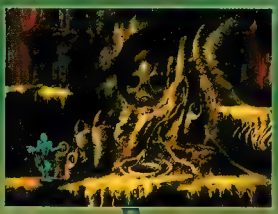

Abe gets all emotional! More panic! More talking! More pleading!

Save the Mudokons and save your game anywhere!

Other heroes have swords, chainsaws, and vaporizers to deal with their monstrous enemies. In Oddworld, all you've got is gas. Abe now has the ability to possess his own farts and blow his enemies away! It's a power he's going to need if he's going to stop the Glukkon Meat Barons from making Soulstorm Brew – the only beverage made from real Mudokon tears and bones. Fart possession. No other game has it and frankly, we're not sure any other game would want it!
ODDWORLD ABE'S EXODDUS
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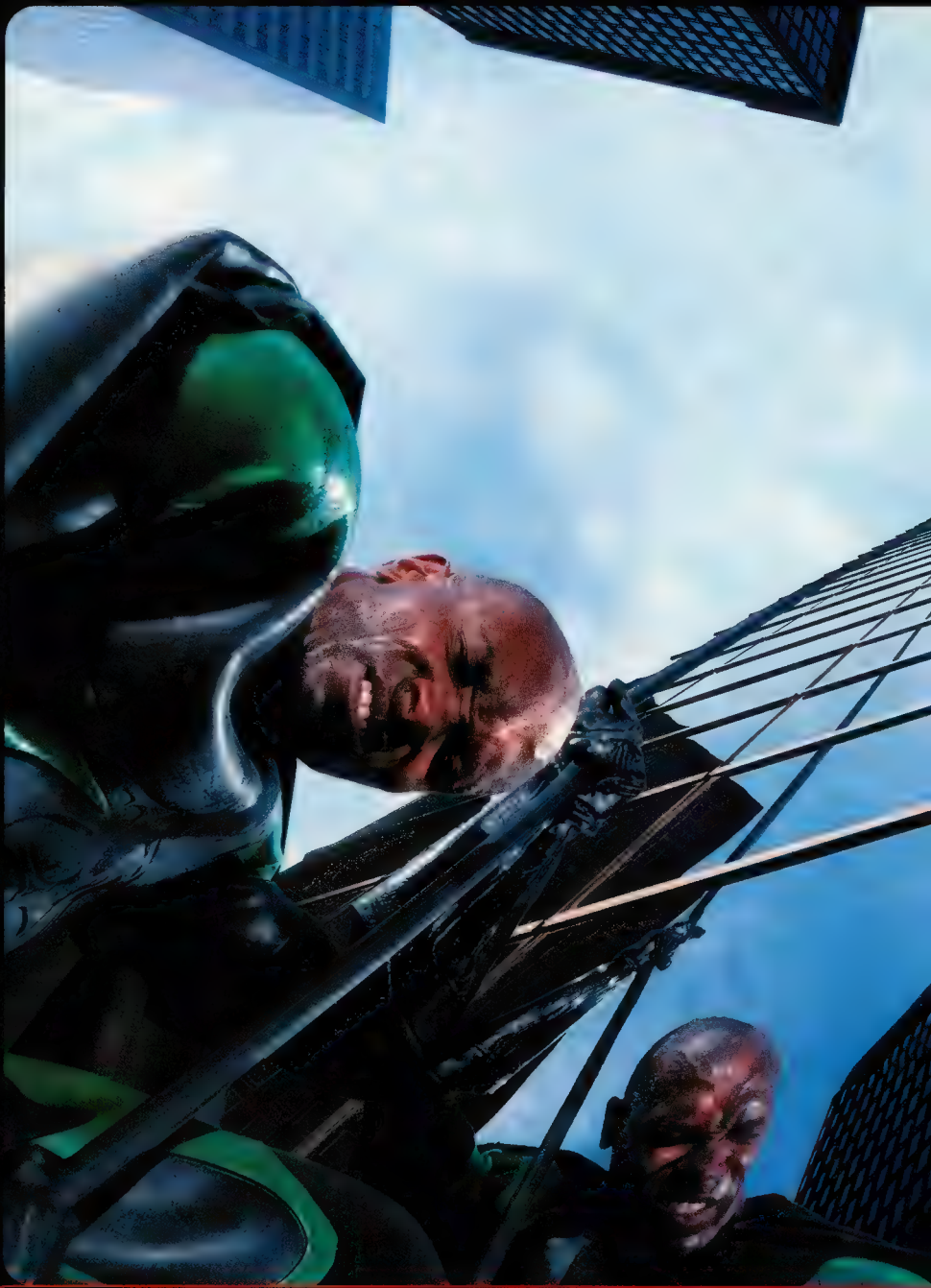

Obtain the latest codes from: www.gameshark.com • 1.900.773.SHARK (Call costs $1.29/minute. You must be 18 years of age or have parent's permission.) Dangerous Waters Newsletter (For info call 410.785.5661) • Gaming Mag
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LOMBARD IL 60148
EGM
1998

egm letters

Compiled by Shoe

Letter of the Month

Girls Are Just Like Guys. Except They Smell Better.

In the past, I've read very few letters from girls, and most of those letters bash the industry and comment on how sexist and offensive videogames are to women. In some aspects, maybe they are, but that's not how I look at it. I'm not writing you to tell you how sick I am of gun-toting, scantily clad, big-breasted women because that doesn't bother me. I'm writing to give you another point of view, from a gal who is having a darn good time with her PlayStation!

Videogames and I go a long way back. I've seen them change and grow through the years. Maybe that's why I'm not offended by the sex and violence content, because I've gradually gotten used to them. (Or maybe it's because I'm a huge tomboy. I don't know.)

True, games these days are geared toward the male audience. But those games I think I enjoy the most! [Take] Tomb Raider, for example. Lara Croft not only made videogaming history, but also became an object of desire among men. To me, Lara Croft really showed what girls can do. She's tough, she's smart and she can kick some serious butt! So what if she's a size DD—it's not her fault, right? Resident Evil 2 is another one of my favorites. I just love blowing off zombie heads with my shotgun.

Trust me. Girls are not that different than you. We don't have special "needs." We don't need games created especially for us. Just stick to great games like Tekken 3 and Crash Bandicoot. Eventually, girls will take notice and if they don't, then they don't belong in our happy family. Girls and guys shouldn't judge a game because a busty babe is on the cover. And I think the girls who are disgusted with this are forgetting those dreamy guys out there (like Leon and Cloud).

My advice for the girls out there, look what's right in front of you. What more could you want? If you don't like what's out on the market, then videogames aren't for you. Don't ruin it for the rest of us who love what's out there. For me, I'm in videogame heaven. I'm not living in a man's videogame world. I'm living in MY videogame world.

Kaitlin Hess
Peach Bottom, PA

Lately, we've been getting a lot of mail from female gamers like you. Spice World for the PlayStation must have warmed a lot of you up to videogaming! (Please don't hurt us!

We're just kidding!) Make sure to check out what Nikki Douglas, publisher of Girl Gamer, has to say about girls and gaming in this month's Press Start.

LETTER OF THE MONTH Contest Rules: 1. No Purchase Necessary. To enter, send your letter to letters, Letters in the Editor, 1920 Highland Avenue, Suite 222, Lombard, Illinois 60148, or e-mail us at EGM_letters@zd.com. Make sure to include your name, address and phone number. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. Entries must be received by the 15th day of the month for the next available issue of EGM. Sendai Publishing Group, Inc. assumes no responsibility for lost, misdirected, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due, or misdirected entries. Contest open to residents of United States and Canada, void in Quebec. 2. Each Letter of the Month will win a prize pack containing a Sega Dreamcast Controller, Sega Dreamcast Visual Memory Unit (VMU), Sega Dreamcast Puyo Puyo Fun for Dreamcast or Game Boy Color, Sony PlayStation Dual Shock Analog Controller, Sony PlayStation Memory Card, Sony PlayStation Puyo Puyo Sun for PlayStation or Game Boy Color, Nintendo 64 Controller, Nintendo 64 Rumble Pak, Nintendo 64 Memory Card, Nintendo 64 Puyo Puyo Sun 64 for Nintendo 64 or Game Boy Color, Nintendo Game Boy Color Puyo Puyo Sun for Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Rally 2 for Dreamcast, Sega Dreamcast Power Stone 2 for Dreamcast, Sega Dreamcast Virtua Fighter 3tb for Dreamcast or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Virtua Tennis for Dreamcast or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega GT for Dreamcast or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Crazy Taxi for Dreamcast or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sonic Adventure 2 for Dreamcast or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Bass Fishing for Dreamcast or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Chu Chu Rocket for Dreamcast or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Space Channel 5 for Dreamcast or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Smash Pack Volume 1 for Dreamcast or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Smash Pack Volume 2 for Dreamcast or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Dreamcast Arcade Stick or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Dreamcast Fighting Stick or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Dreamcast Visual Memory Unit (VMU) or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Dreamcast Jump Pack or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Dreamcast Racing Wheel or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Dreamcast Light Gun or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Dreamcast Keyboard or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Dreamcast Mouse or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Dreamcast Modem or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Dreamcast Microphone or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Dreamcast Expansion Slot or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Dreamcast Expansion Slot 2 or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Dreamcast Expansion Slot 3 or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Dreamcast Expansion Slot 4 or Game Boy Color, Sega Dreamcast Sega Dreamcast Expansion Slot

Rigor Motorist

egm letters

I've kept up with it ever since I sat down and didn't stir for oh, eight hours until I beat up M.Bison with the ever- lithe Chun-Li. Since then, I've kept up with the evolving series.

But to say that I kept up purely out of a drive to be the best would be a bit false. I mean, that was the intention at first, but I began to discover that, when playing at the arcade, it was always against a guy. Always! So, as a gal, it was only natural for me to realize that I had stumbled on a veritable gold mine of (mostly) single guys!

Now, I'm no Lara Croft...maybe more of a Princess Toadstool, I'd say. But did I EVER get even a whiff of a date at all? Hardly! I don't understand! I thought that if I showed a guy how good I was at the game, he would be so thrilled to find a girl who was as interested and dedicated to videogames as he was. I thought he would be convinced that I was "the one."

When that didn't work, I thought that losing was the ticket. I couldn't do it deliberately because it felt too deceptive. So I purposely played against these genius players. They'd beat me, and what would happen? Nothing! No sympathetic pat on the shoulder, no comforting word, just a steady stare into the screen and the look of a lion awaiting his next kill.

So then I tried the cheerleader approach. I'd stand next to that machine, pick my guy, then cheer or sigh at the appropriate times. That never worked either. None of it ever worked...that's why I'm still single.

What am I doing wrong? I need some advice...am I looking in the wrong place? Or is my approach wrong? I know some puritans out there would feel I am abusing the art of the videogame, but I want to have something in common with a guy, and at least I know we'll have something to talk about. Is this just some half-baked fantasy? Has anyone ever heard any success stories in this area? I'm at my wits' end!

P.S. Crispin is pretty cute...is he looking for a Princess Toadstool? Just a thought...

Kim Hoffman
r_pooka@juno.com

You want some advice? Quit hanging out with dorks!

No Thrills

I just found out that Thrill Kill won't reach store shelves because Electronic Arts won't let Virgin release it. Now, I don't know about anyone else, but I don't want someone deciding for me what I can and can't play. Is this not what they made ratings for? I mean, look at Japan. They have games over there that never make it to our shores because of violence and/or sex. Is this right? I say no. Let the gaming nation decide what is too much for us. If a child gets a copy of these types of games, then some parents are not doing their jobs. But, don't decide for us (adults) what we can and can't play.

Kevin Newell
LyricalAssault@webtv.net

Actually, Electronic Arts has every right to decide whether you should play Thrill Kill or not. You see, it's their game. They can do whatever they want with it.

See Press Start for details on Thrill Kill's early demise.

We Love Our Readers, But...

Issue #110's Question of the Moment was, "What Game Franchises Need To Die Before More Sequels Come Out?" One response from OoACESoO@aol.com was, "Sonic needs to have his ass blown away." You guys printed his response, which means you obviously must somewhat agree with it. Yet, you feel the need to publish an issue featuring Sonic the Hedgehog on the cover and print a, ummm...one-...two-...a 10-page article on Sonic's new game? I'm just a little confused. Could you help me clear my head on this subject?

Mike Atherton
Metallic@aol.com

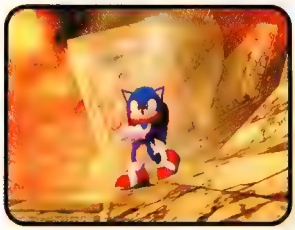
Sorry to burst your bubble, but we do not agree with every reader comment that we print on these pages. If we did, then that'd mean we're Sega biased, Nintendo biased and PlayStation biased. It'd also mean we're "a bunch of fat guys with kegs of beer." (We are not a bunch of fat guys with kegs of beer! We're only aspiring to be.)

We are simply providing an open forum for *your* opinions. Some we agree with, some we don't. How boring would *EGM* Letters and Question of the Moment be if we only printed letters that we agreed with?...

Dear Shoe,

My sister thinks you're cute.

Galen Li
dØhmer@pacbell.net



Just because one reader thinks this hedgehog ought to be executed doesn't mean we do too. We love the lil' guy.

No Games Allowed

I need your electronic expertise to sort out a big misunderstanding. Recently, my mother decided to buy a 36-inch TV. This is great because now I can see all of my games in full glory and in stereo sound.

Unfortunately my mom has other plans, "No N64 or PS will be connected to my new TV!" She believes that gaming systems damage the television that they're connected to. I say she's on crack because gaming systems don't do anything to the TV. Can you help sort out the facts? Do gaming systems damage TVs? I'd just love to hand her the next *EGM* with your response and watch her squirm!

Jaime Mercado
Jaylek@asan.com

Question of the Moment

What does Nintendo need to do to take back the industry's #1 spot?

Three things: Metroid, Kid Icarus and the ability to make a firm decision (64DD?).
masterveil@email.msn.com

Take over Sony Computer Entertainment! If you can't beat 'em, buy 'em out.
JVitale1@aol.com

Nintendo has to get Rare to stop making games for pre-schoolers.
DRmn247@aol.com

Get rid of them damn games made for children! Start making more M-rated games.
stormvermin72@hotmail.com

More games, cheaper prices, more games, cheaper prices...see a pattern?
Mufferz1@aol.com

Ditch the cartridges and have Mario put the mack on Princess Toadstool.
shinra@jps.net

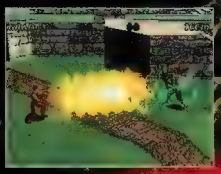
What *don't* they need to do?
RageNChaos@aol.com

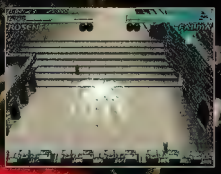
Lower licensing fees.
mussen@oswego.edu

Tell Midway not to make a sequel to War Gods.
singingeagle@infoave.net

Next Month's Question of the Moment: What features would you like to see on the PlayStation 2/Next?
Send your short but sweet responses to: EGM@zd.com with the subject heading: **PS2**

LONG AGO, A SMALL COUNTRY WAS BESTOWED MYSTICAL OBJECTS POSSESSING MYSTICAL POWERS. BUT THESE OBJECTS, RELICS, WERE MUCH TOO POWERFUL. EVENTUALLY, THE EMPIRE DESTROYED ITSELF, SEALING ITS SECRET FOR ETERNITY. 1000 YEARS LATER, ONE MAN HAS UNLEASHED THE POWER AND ONCE AGAIN, THE CONTINENT FACES TOTAL DESTRUCTION. PIT RELIC AGAINST RELIC AS 12 INDIVIDUALS FIGHT FOR PEACE, POWER, GREED AND PROSPERITY. OBJECTS OF POWER FAIL, BUT THE SCARS REMAIN...





FROM THE CREATORS OF *DYNASTY WARRIORS*...

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Dual Shock is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. PlayStation and PlayStation logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

Hell, yeah, gaming systems can damage your television! Check this out:

Remember this very silly, very disturbing Naki ad for their Lunar Gun with Red Laser Sight? Damn that TV got it good...

Actually, your mom isn't entirely stupid. Depending on your TV, you can cause screen burn-in if you leave one still image on for a very long period of time. (You know you have burn-in if you see shadows of the image, even when the TV is turned off.)

But tell your mom not to worry. Most newer televisions are screen burn-in resistant. So unless you're planning on pausing your game and leaving for a two-week vacation, your TV should be just fine (and if you do have to pause a game for huge, extended periods, simply turn your television set off).

U.S. Delays Are A-OK

I just read the videogames.com newsletter about the Japanese Metal Gear Solid being too short, but being fixed for the U.S. release. I wish people would stop bitching about games coming out in Japan first. Because games come out there first, problems can be resolved, additions can be made, and we can get a superior product (except with Resident Evil: DC).

Mark Buckingham
markbuc@juno.com

A few games get some nice treatment en route to U.S. players, like Activision's Tenchu (which received a much-needed boost in enemy AI, among other things). Too bad this sometimes works the wrong way, like with Capcom's Rival Schools (which lost an entire mode of play). But still, that's a nice glass-half-full attitude you got there, son. We're proud of you.

Konami did make the U.S. MGS a bit tougher (our Easy difficulty setting is the Japanese default difficult setting), and they tweaked the engine a bit (they continued to work on the game after the Japanese release), but the game is still pretty short. Don't let that stop you, however. Metal Gear Solid is still mighty fine. And we mean, *mighty* fine. Will it be the highest-scoring game in the history of the Review Crew? Find out in this issue...

Family Bonding

Thank you a million times for your guide to buying arcade machines [editor's note: *EGM* #112: "How to Find and Buy an Arcade Game"—don't tell us you missed it!]. I found an auction in my native Phoenix and bought Street Fighter II: C.E. and Strider.

I didn't tell my parents that I was going to buy them, so the first thing my dad said was, "What the HELL did you buy?" Then he said, "I'm going to beat you with Ryu."

XModemsX@aol.com

Boy, if you left out "with Ryu" in your letter, it would've turned it from a very happy to a very sad and abusive ending.

You're welcome, a million times.

OOPS

Oh boy this one's going to be a doozy. Seems Emberlin Stark from last month's *EGM* Letters may have jinxed us...

•Dead or Alive is Model 2 game, not Model 3 like Mark Hain said in his Dead or Alive ++ preview. He's fired. No more free arcade games for him.

•The classic Game Boy Zelda cart is not A Link to the Past as we stated in our Game Boy Color feature. It's Zelda: Link's Awakening. We knew that. But late deadlines can mess with your mind, you know. We're severely punishing the editors responsible for that boo-boo.

•The original Military Madness has a Two-player Mode, contrary to what Wataru stated in his Nectaris: Military Madness preview. Wat never had any friends, so he never discovered the two-player option.

•Big oops: the developers of Rally Cross 2 are Idol Minds, not Idle Minds. Yikes. We weren't trying to say anything...it was an honest mistake. Everyone was pointing fingers at everyone else for that one, so we sacked the entire team. Any of you want a job at *EGM*?

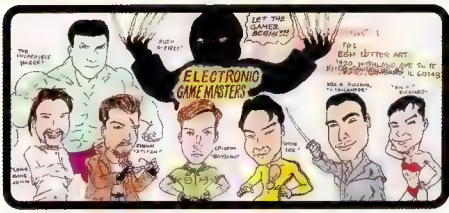
Letter Art

Where creativity, your favorite video game and a stamp can make you immortal!*

WINNER

Marlon Eric Fernandez
Q.C. Philippines

Congratulations, your prize is on the way—an ASCII Specialized Control Pad for the PlayStation. It features rapid-fire controls for all buttons and slow motion for those intense moments.



Starring (according to Marlon): Sushi X-Pired, The Incredible Hager, Long Gone John, Shawn "Stitch," Crispin "Boy Scout," Shoe "Lee," Kraig "Highlander," and Bikini Riccardi

Close, but no controller

Jean-Francois Duval
Boisbriand, Quebec

Jay Samsom
Santa Clara, CA

Walter Costescu—Garden Grove, CA

The ASCII Control Pad

Put your creative skills to the test by decking out a #10 envelope (the long business type) with your own unique touch. Send your letter art to:

EGM Letter Art
1920 Highland Ave., Suite 222
Lombard, IL 60148

(All entries become the property of ZD Inc. and will not be returned)

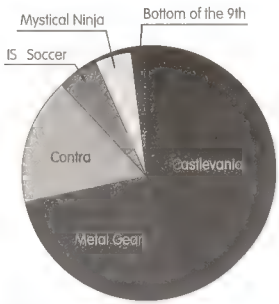
*Or at least get your name in the magazine and win yourself a great prize (FIRST PLACE ONLY!).

THE SUSHI-X FILES

COMMENTS? THE SUSHI-X FILES • 1920 HIGHLAND AVE. STE. 222 • LOMBARD, IL 60148 • E-MAIL: SHAWN_SMITH@ZD.COM

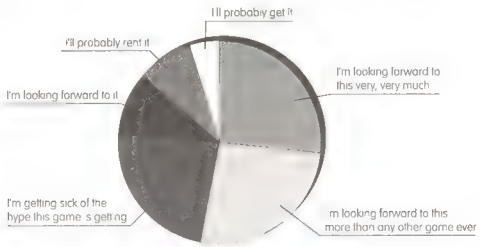
Videogames.com Polls:

With the release of Metal Gear Solid upon us, we thought it'd be interesting to see what Konami series is most popular among the thousands of visitors to our Web site. So some time ago we asked **Which of the following is your favorite series of games from Konami?**



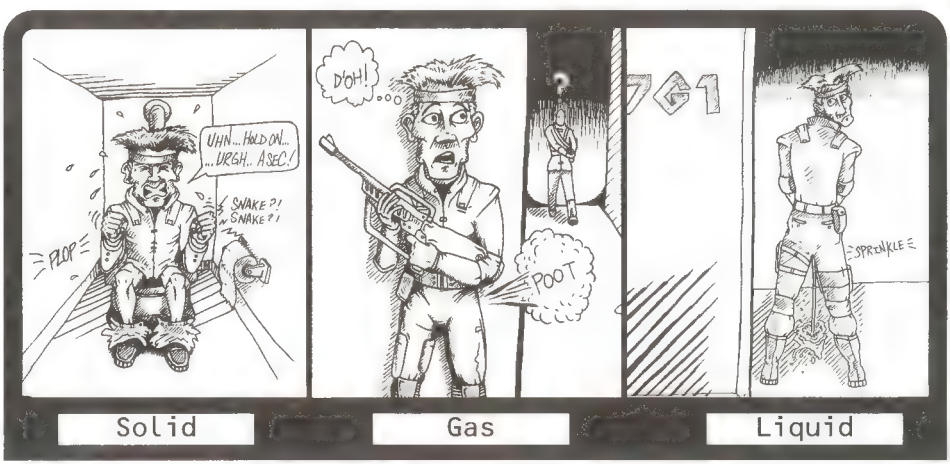
Videogames.com main poll results for Tues, Sept. 15, 1998

Sure, we all know how much good press Metal Gear Solid has been getting, and as seen in this month's Review Crew, it deserves every bit of it. But not everyone feels that way—believe it or not. So we asked **How would you rate your interest in Metal Gear Solid?** As you might expect, most people (more than half, in fact) were dying for it. Other people hate all of the hype Metal Gear Solid has been getting. Surprisingly, some might just rent it.. shyeah, like they won't buy it


I'll probably get it
I'll probably rent it
I'm looking forward to this very, very much
I'm looking forward to it
I'm getting sick of the hype this game is getting
I'm looking forward to this more than any other game ever

Videogames.com poll results for Wed, Sept. 9, 1998

Metal Gear...



GAMING SITES

AS HOT AS LAVA

www.videogames.com

As promised last month here are some gaming sites. Note: These sites are not affiliated with EGM in any way. We are merely listing these sites for your viewing pleasure. Enjoy them for what they are.

- www.n64nation.com/readerscorner/robtopten.htm
- www.laracroft.com
- fly.to/zelda64
- home.clara.net/fookes
- www.grrlgamer.com
- www.64source.com
- www.dragonfire.net/~Darkni/dragon/dragon.htm
- www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/Arena/1571/
- members.spree.com/roughnight/main.htm
- www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/Chasm/3366/
- www.game-revolution.com
- www.angelfire.com/ar/BigMiguelSanchez/
- www.ugpo.com/index1.html

WEB SITES

AS COOL AS ICE

members.tripod.com/~HatPerson/weirdweb.html

Thanks to all who are sending Web sites. As always, we give you the good, the bad and the weird. A very special thanks go out to KIDVID237@aol.com for the URL above. You da man! Now the list.

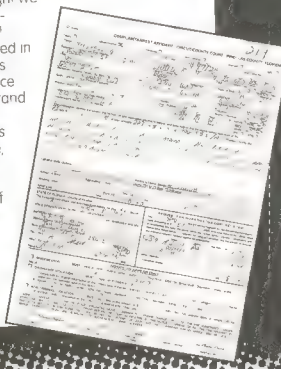
- www.drumkit.demon.co.uk
- members.xoom.com/brainmexican
- farto.nu
- www.geocities.com/NapaValley/2066/
- users.uniserve.com/~sbarclay/seamonk.htm
- come.to/CrazyCrap/
- members.xoom.com/vinniemannino/choosedestiny.htm
- www.mncs.k12.mn.us/frog/picts.html
- www.cheesysoft.com/cheeselinks.html
- www.rinkworks.com/dialect/
- junior.apk.net/~jbarta/idiot/idiot.html
- members.tripod.com/~UtterlyChaotic/
- www.jodi.org (WARNING: May induce epilepsy)
- www.rainfrog.com/mishacat/toilet.shtml
- www.mindspring.com/~jims/outhouse.htm
- www.holisticmed.com/aspartame/

*We cannot be held responsible for any of the material presented on the sites listed above. Parents or guardians may want to verify the content of the site(s) before allowing their children to venture forth. Ya' dig? Dig.

SECRET INSIDER INFO • PLEASE DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME!

CRISPIN JAILED!

This is no joke! Crispin was actually jailed about a month ago when he went on vacation to Florida. He made the mistake of having a party up on the roof of a hardware store (which was closed by the way) with a group of chums he used to hang out with in his younger years. They weren't doing anything too crazy, just hangin' with the pigeons. When the cops came, he and his old friends ran—unfortunately the fuzz was waiting for them at the bottom of the pipe they used to climb onto the roof. After being frisked, threatened and read his rights, Crispin was hauled off in the back of a squad. Crispin and his pals spent the night in jail. Ha. And you thought we EGM editors were a quiet, well-mannered bunch. Think again! Thankfully Crispin wasn't violated in any ugly way, although he has been walking strange ever since then. What's next? Probably grand theft auto (the crime, not the game). Like a bear who craves human flesh after its first taste, Crispin will never go back to being a law-abiding citizen. Now he wants to lead a life of crime. Well, at least he'll have something to do instead of sleeping, cry baby cry!



Proof is in the puddin'... that's what inmates say when they're in prison.

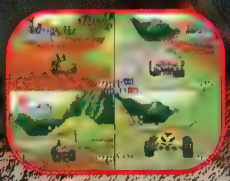
HOT & NOT

@ EGM

The list, the list, the list is on fire, we don't need no water—let the mother scratcher burn. Anyway, as always here's what we think is cool, and other stuff that's not even worth spitting on or whatever. Remember: Send some of your own in and we'll run 'em (if they're good).

- **Andy Baran for being such an incredible sport about the whole severed-head thing**
- **The Metal Gear Solid release**
- **A Tribe Called Quest**
- **The N64 Memory 4MB Expansion Pak**
- **Robert De Niro**
- **Pokémon**
- **Shoe's new house**
- **EGM moving into a new building**
- **Zelda 64 gold cartridge**
- **Dreamcast**
- **Jay Silvey's Tekken 3 skillz**
- **Kerri Hoskins**
- **George Romero**
- **Fatty deadline foods**
- **Sushi's Amex bill**
- **Turok 2's cerebral bore**
- **The cover of Marilyn Manson's new album cover...yikes.**
- **An understaffed EGM**
- **Dean's appendix surgery**
- **A Tribe Called Quest breaking up or disbanding or whatever.**
- **Jaded gamers who think Metal Gear Solid sucks...bah!**
- **Tails** (The Scrappy Doo of gaming)
- **Scrappy Doo** (The Tails of cartoons)
- **Cancelled paintball games**
- **Flatulence during meetings**
- **Life-sucking sales-types**
- **E-bola**
- **E-coli**
- **E. Honda not wearing his sumo diaper thing**
- **Fatty deadline foods**
- **Bud Selig**
- **Soppin' wet dogs**

SCARRED FOR LIFE



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Ask Sushi-X

egm letters

Who's the most hardcore gamer of them all? Why it's our very own Sushi-X, *Electronic Gaming Monthly*'s top videogame expert. If you have a game-specific question for our mysterious ninja freak, er, friend, write him! He'll pick out a few and answer them as only he knows how. Send your questions to:

Sushi-X
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Lombard, IL 60148
e-mail: sushi_x@zd.com

My 2 Cents

What's your take on Ehrgeiz?
Presten Foye
Caldwell, ID

I think Ehrgeiz is cool. If the Japanese PlayStation demo is any indication, the conversion will mimic the coin-op almost exactly. In case you didn't know, Ehrgeiz has very similar play mechanics to Tobal 2. The action is fast and there's a wide range of characters to choose from. The chances of the game making it to these shores seems better than it was for Tobal 2 due to the addition of five Final Fantasy VII characters. Being able to play as Cloud, Tifa, Sephiroth, Yuffie and Vincent is almost too cool. Hopefully Square will bless U.S. gamers with this gem.

I own a Saturn now and intend to import many games. One of the games I want to import the most is X-Men vs. Street Fighter, so I'm planning on getting that 4-in-1 converter. But if I import another game that doesn't require the 4MB of RAM, will that game still work with the 4-in-1 cart?
Jason Dohrwardt
Mascoutah, IL

Yes, the 4-in-1 carts you're speaking of (like the Action Replay Plus) act as a converter cartridge so they'll let you play almost every Japanese Saturn game, whether they need the additional memory or not.

I noticed in one of your older Tiger Woods 99 previews that the game boasts the official PGA Tour license. I also noticed the option of a mulligan (a second try after a bad shot). If the developers knew anything about golf, they would know that in professional golf, you are not allowed to use a mulligan. A mulligan is only used when playing for fun.
Greg Say
Athens, PA

You know how in some sports games, you can turn off certain rules and/or penalties? Now that's not exactly true-to-life, is it? NHL refs would be appalled if hockey players decided that two-line passing or offsides are allowed at will.

It's just a videogame, Greg. Videogames have that certain freedom that allows you to alter the official rules of sports.

In *EGM* issue #111, Shoe stated that the N64 and its cartridges could theoretically "support a complete, tag-teamin' X-Men vs. Street Fighter." If this is true, how come Capcom didn't make the game for the N64? I know the game would have sold a lot. I know I would've definitely bought it.
Elvis Martinez
Miami, FL

Could and would are two different stories. The sad truth is, game companies make a lot more money making games for the PlayStation than they do for the N64 (higher PS installed base, cheaper CD format). This is just my speculation, but I think Capcom's not willing to spend the resources needed to make a great Vs. game on the risky cartridge market when they have greener pastures with the PlayStation and much more power with the Dreamcast.

I hope things change, but I doubt they will. The Nintendo 64 desperately needs a Capcom fighter...any Capcom fighter! I'd be willing to settle for the original Street Fighter II at this point.

How come you haven't reviewed Turok 2 yet? I saw a review of it already in one of your competing magazines. It looks like you dropped the ball on this one...
Ben Bressman
Santa Monica, CA

At the time I'm writing this (mid-October), Turok 2 isn't finished yet. The single-player game is still being tweaked and the multiplayer game is pretty non-existent. If you read a review in a mag that came out in October, that meant they wrote that review back in September. Back then, the game was even more incomplete (when I saw Turok 2 in September, only a few early levels were finished).

I know what magazine you're referring to, but I'll try to maintain some sense of maturity and refrain from naming names. But I can't imagine why any mag would want to review an unfinished product, unless they're that desperate to scoop the rest of the industry. Acclaim's not going to throw too much of a fit though, since that mag gave the game a perfect score. So it looks like they'll get away with reviewing the incomplete product. Too bad, because I have a lot of respect for that mag.

Our Review Crew policy is not flexible. We will only give scores to finished, fully reviewable games. If that means being the last ones to print a review (because our competition is rushing out reviews early), then so be it.

Did you hear us punk? We're not going to review you until we're good and ready!

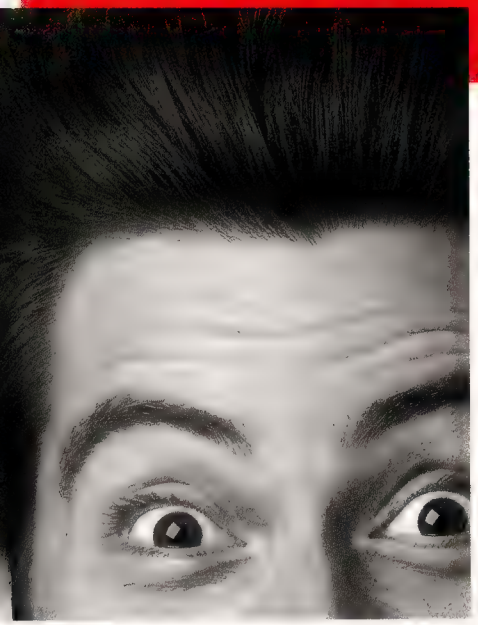
I'm a big fan of the Dungeons & Dragons games at the arcades. So when *EGM* said that both of these games were coming out in one collection for the Japanese Saturn, I was ready to import.

But months have passed, and every time I call an import store, they tell me it's cancelled or pushed back. Since you're great at getting info from Japan, could you tell me if the D&D games are coming out?
Craig Benusa
Arcadia, WI

What's the story with a PlayStation version of the Dungeons & Dragons Collection? As for a Saturn release, I couldn't care less (I don't own a Saturn and I don't speak Japanese).
Richard Gray
Bennington, NE

The D&D Collection is still supposed to come out for the Saturn in Japan this winter. It will support the 4MB cart. Capcom cancelled plans for a Japanese PlayStation release. So unless that changes, you can completely forget about an U.S. release (a PlayStation version will have to come out in Japan before it'll come out here, and we all know we'll never see a U.S. Saturn version).

Gaming so fast, you won't know what annihilated you.



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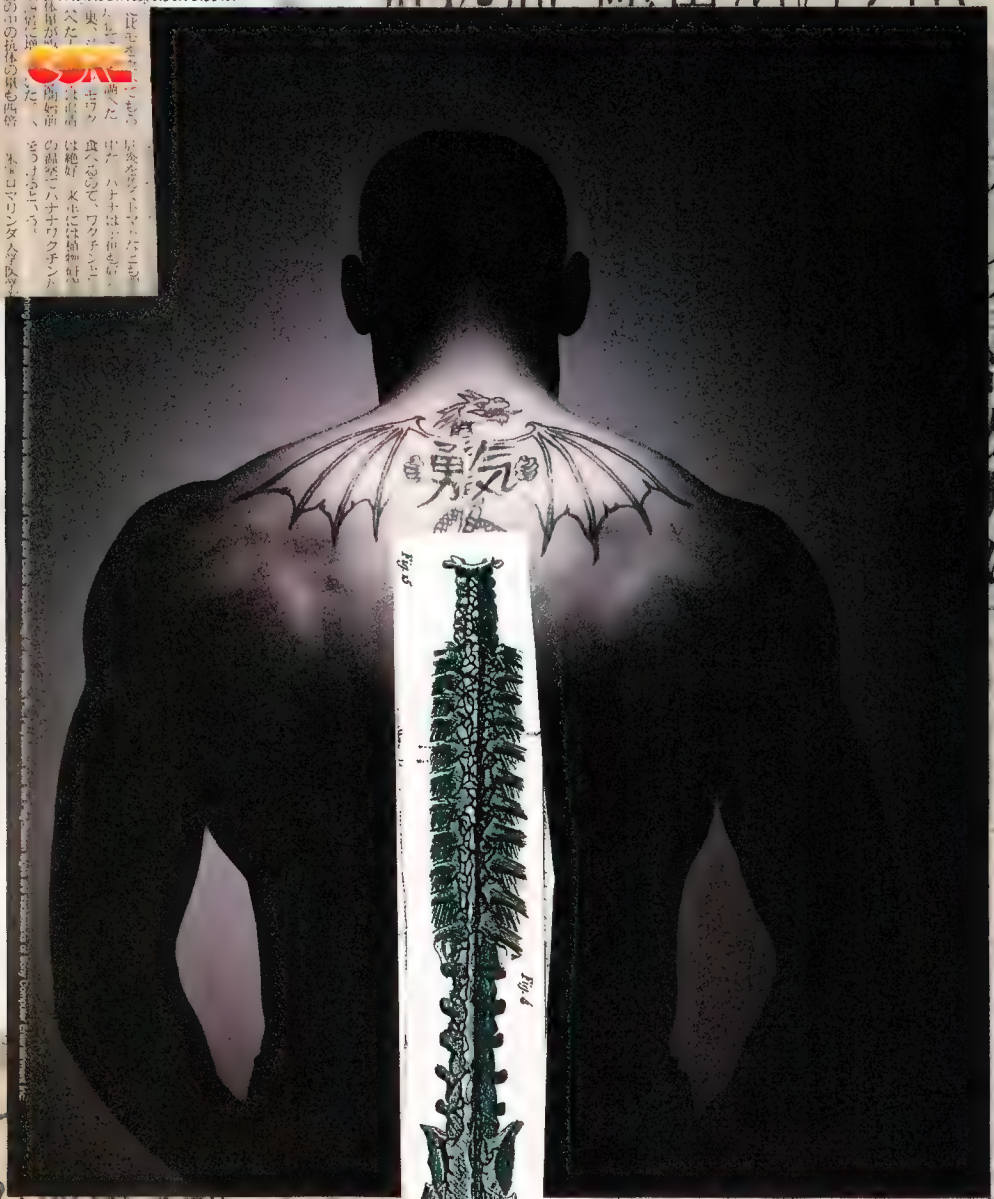

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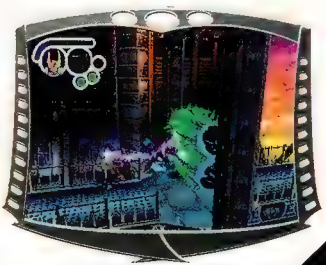
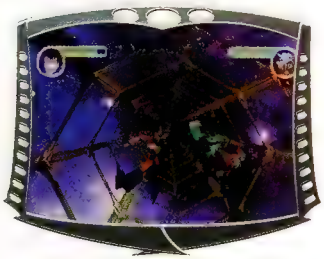


GRIND villains to Pieces!



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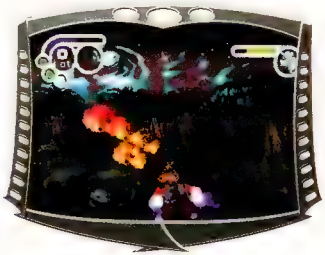

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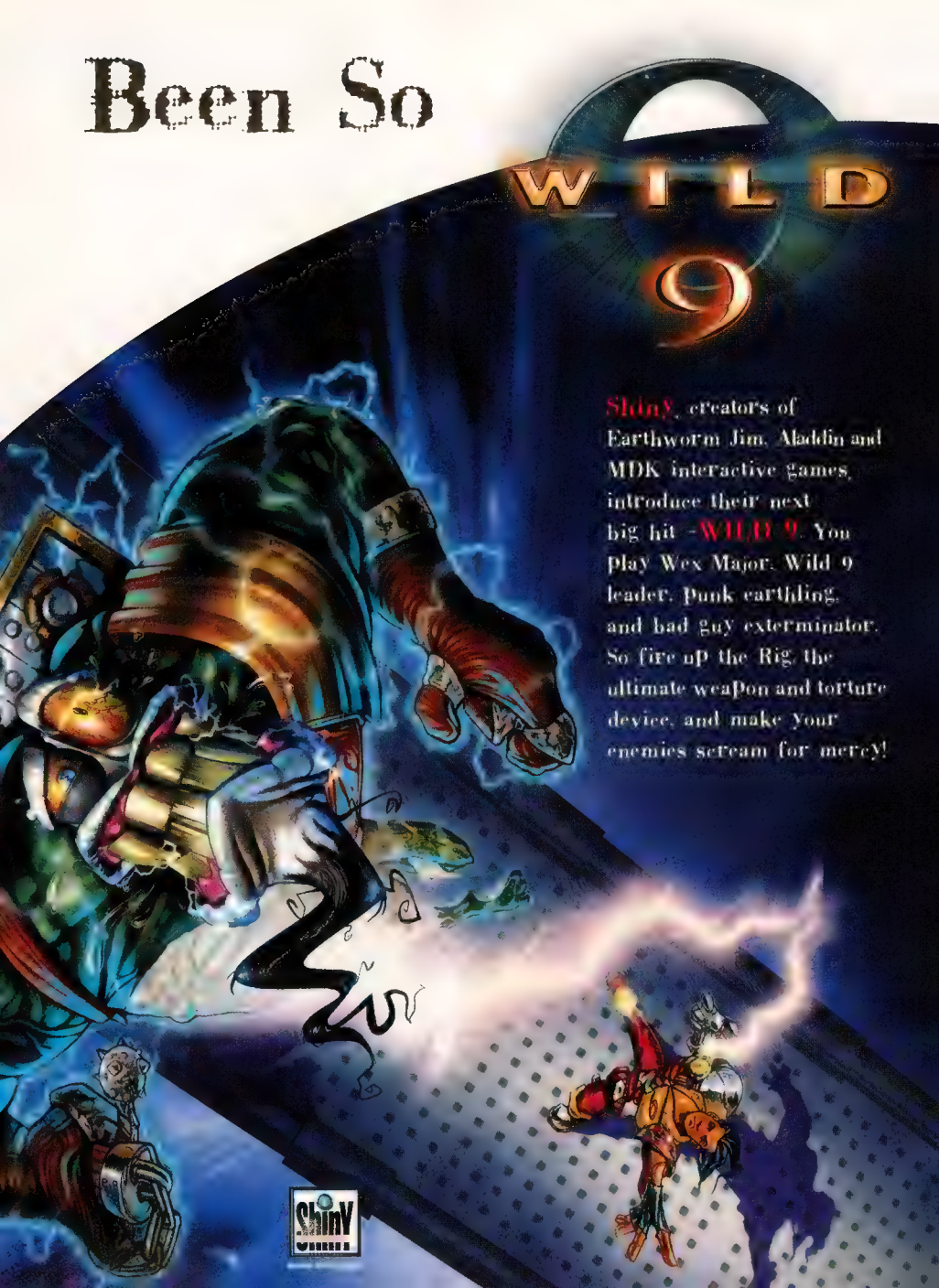
Been So


WILD
9
Shiny, creators of Earthworm Jim, Aladdin and MDK interactive games, introduce their next big hit -WILD 9. You play Wex Major: Wild 9 leader, Punk earthling, and bad guy exterminator. So fire up the Rig, the ultimate weapon and torture device, and make your enemies scream for mercy!
Shiny

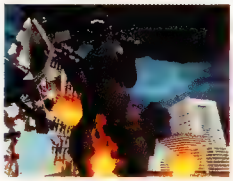
By Chris Johnston chris_johnston@zd.com

Press Start

The hottest gaming news on the planet

Dreaming of Reality

Sega announces its final plan for the Japanese launch of the Dreamcast



From top to bottom, the initial batch of Sega titles (aside from VF3tb): Sega Rally 2, Godzilla Generations, July and Pen-Pen Trilcelon. More games will be released throughout the month of December—including Sonic Adventures.

Dreamcast was the watch word at this year's Tokyo Game Show. It was nearly impossible not to see the Dreamcast logo, as Sega handed out DC bags at the local train station, so nearly everyone had one all over the show. Aside from that, Sega's entire booth (with the exception of a very small Saturn area) was devoted to Dreamcast.

The big news, however, came at Sega's New Challenge Conference II, held a few days before the opening of the Tokyo Game Show. At it, Sega announced all remaining Dreamcast details for the Nov. 27 Japanese launch and beyond. First off is the price—at 29,800 yen (about $250 at current exchange rates) it's more expensive than originally expected. It includes the system, a controller, one modular phone cable, a stereo AV cord, Dreamcast Passport communication software and a power cord.

At launch, the system will have five titles: Sega Rally 2 (the first DC game supporting network play), Godzilla Generations, Pen Pen Trilcelon, Virtua Fighter 3tb and July. Each will retail for 5800 yen ($43). Sega's plan is to release one new title each week after the launch for four weeks (at least). This begins with Blue Stinger on 12/3, followed in order by Geist Force, Sonic Adventure, and four games on 12/23—Incoming, Evolution, Seventh Cross and Monaco Grand Prix Racing Simulation 2. Day and date with the launch will be the release of a DC Arcade Stick, Racing Controller, Dreamcast Keyboard and separate Visual Memory Systems.

Without a doubt the one game everyone will be buying when the Dreamcast is finally launched, Virtua Fighter 3 Team Battle looks just as good as the arcade game.

(Right) Proof that things really are right on the horizon, Sega showed "finished" products just to reassure everyone. Dreamcast games come in PlayStation-style jewel cases.

Which of the following Dreamcast games are you looking forward to?

Electronic Gaming Monthly
Poll results as of
Oct. 13, 1998.

Dreamcast Gets Online in Japan

Sega sets up many ways for players to get online with Dreamcast

Sega is hoping that the online component for the Dreamcast will become one of the system's most popular features. Building up to that, Sega announced its plans for the Net at the conference before TGS.

First is the announcement of Sega's main online software, called "Dream Passport," which will be included with the system. Passport gives Dreamcast users instant access to Sega's Dricas (that's Dreamcast, shortened) Web page.

As for what Dreamcast owners can do once set up with Passport, almost anything that could possibly be offered, is. Web access, e-mail, contests, chat—all of that will be part of Sega's service. As a side note, Sega also announced that it will offer WebTV compatibility beginning in spring 1999—a subscription application will be included with the hardware. Also, Sega announced that it's working with DWANGO to provide multiplayer gaming services to DC owners.

Sega Rally 2 will be the first game to utilize the DC's multiplayer capabilities, with a day and date release with the system. There is a flat rate charge using Sega's service to play opponents anywhere in Japan, but each player must have his/her own copy of the game to play.

Sega will be offering DC users an as-yet undetermined amount of free access to its own online service, but users will also be able to purchase prepaid access cards to gain access on an hourly basis. If you already have Internet access, you can use that to access Sega's services. Sega will also hold e-mail contests so users can win valuable prizes by being a member.

The official Dricas site will have everything a player could want, including a member profile search so you can find other DC players in your area to play head-to-head with (although it's not mandatory to upload your information for everyone to see). In addition to also posting the latest Dreamcast news and gossip, there will be daily comics drawn by renowned manga artists.

The modem module has been designed so that it can be easily upgraded. A cable modem in the U.S. perhaps?

The Future of DC Online

Sega will offer services through the Dricas site. Here are just a few examples of what they've got planned for the future for the Japanese market:

Dream Map With this, you can locate DC users in your area for multiplayer games. You can upload your information or just see how many users there are in your area.
MailChum! This provides you with an instant e-mail pen pal, from a variety of characters ranging from beautiful girls to mythical animals.
Daily DC News Sega will e-mail a virtual newspaper to Dreamcast users that includes news as it happens directly from the source.
Dream Flyer Dreamcast's e-mail software. This is an original e-mail client which allows users to create a graphical or visual message to send to friends or family. Choose from different designs, postcards or envelopes, corresponding to the tone of your message.

Evolution of Dreamcast

Sega not only showed Dreamcast as we know it now, but Dreamcast mock-ups from when the system was still early in its development. As you can see, the housing is, well, different in at least two of these designs. That first one could definitely launch itself without a $100 million advertising campaign...

EXPERT GAMER Howard Grossman looks at the Dreamcast

The Dreamcast is almost upon us and skeptics can't help but to be wowed by the initial hardware and software of Sega's latest creation. However, there are many like myself who have been burnt by the lure of Sega's "new" hardware and the promise of "A titles." For us, the Dreamcast represents something inherently different than the initial launch of the Nintendo 64. The N64 maintained a sense of faith in the system and in the company to deliver on what we have grown to expect. The Dreamcast, however, doesn't generate the same type of confidence due to the repeated violation of this type of faith from previous systems.

This is not meant to imply that all the other Sega systems were disappointing, but to state the fact that the bonds of trust have been strained and even broken. Although I don't directly have faith in Sega to pull it off, I do have something almost as strong: hope. This largely comes from the fact of their new and very formidable partners. There is still hope for them, because it seemed they were always trying to push the edge of technology and generate great titles, yet they kept making the same mistakes of new hardware without the software support.

With their new affiliations there is the hope that as a group they will see the errors of the past, the advancements of tomorrow and bundle it with the experience of the largest gaming companies. Honestly, my hope is really self-motivated, in that if they were able to "do the right thing," there will be more competition and, therefore, better games for all of us. Can my faith be restored? Sure, but only with the attention to games and gameplay (not just eye-candy!) that once made Sega a name to be reckoned with.

Sonic Adventure may just be the "A" title the Dreamcast needs to survive, but Sega's past history might ruin the company's chance at a good future.

Thrill Kill Canceled!

What probably would've been the most violent console game ever released, Virgin's Thrill Kill, has been canceled. Virgin Interactive handed off its titles (including Thrill Kill) to Westwood Studios. Westwood, in turn, was purchased by Electronic Arts. Electronic Arts was to distribute the title, but decided that the game's violently graphic content is unsuitable to release.

The game received a lot of attention, and not just for its violent content—the game's four-player fighting engine was considered innovative by many. However, Westwood does own the engine and technology used in the game and there is a possibility that it may release a game in the future using it. Contrary to still-persistent rumors on the Web, the game is not being "cleaned up" content-wise for a future release. We were told that the company had toned it down from an "AO" rating to an "M," but it wasn't good enough to get it suitable for release.

156,455

total number of attendees at the 1998 Tokyo Game Show Autumn over three days.

Developer Profile

Back row, left to right: Kevin Weinstein, Alex Macphee, Jim Mooney, Michael Mayers, Mark Lyons, Andy Meier, Phil Weeks, Phil Collins, Chris Hassell, Nick Trifunovic, Peter Walters. Front row, left to right: Lee Saito, Tim Lindsey, Eric Schafer, Craig Neering, Noel Esporo. Missing: Scott Atkins, Kathleen Atkins.

Idol Minds

Location: Boulder, CO
Web Site: www.idolminds.com

Gameography: Cool Boarders 3 and Rally Cross 2.
Other games staff members have worked on previously: Rally Cross, ESPN Extreme Games, NFL GameDay, 2Extreme, a bunch of SNES/Genesis sports/racing games.
# of employees: 18
During breaks from late-night programming sessions, we: What kind of moron would schedule a game that required late-night programming sessions?
The most challenging thing about developing a new sports game is: Getting as many characters as we want up on the screen without dropping to 2 fps. Reducing polygon counts on the art side and pushing more polygons on the programming side account for a large portion of our headaches.
Our favorite game in the office (not made by us) is: By sheer game hours logged, network Quake II still wins hands-down.
Story behind our name: We started out with Idol Hands, thinking that two huge stone hands holding a PlayStation controller would make for good T-shirts, plus the whole pun thing. That one was of course taken, but we had sketched out all of these cool Idol logos so stuck with the Idol part. Idol Minds made it through the trademark search.
Favorite snack food(s): We go through about 10 boxes of Pop-Tarts a week. With our recent toaster purchase, consumption seems to be on the rise. Ten boxes of Pop-Tarts and several cases of Coke, by the way, make for an embarrassing time at the check-out stand.
Music that inspires us: This greatly varies throughout the office. If you stand in the middle and listen real hard you'll probably hear country twang competing with techno boom to drone out the average rock/folk mixture. Luckily, no one seems to be big on blasting anything too heavy metal.
Team motto: Ship it.

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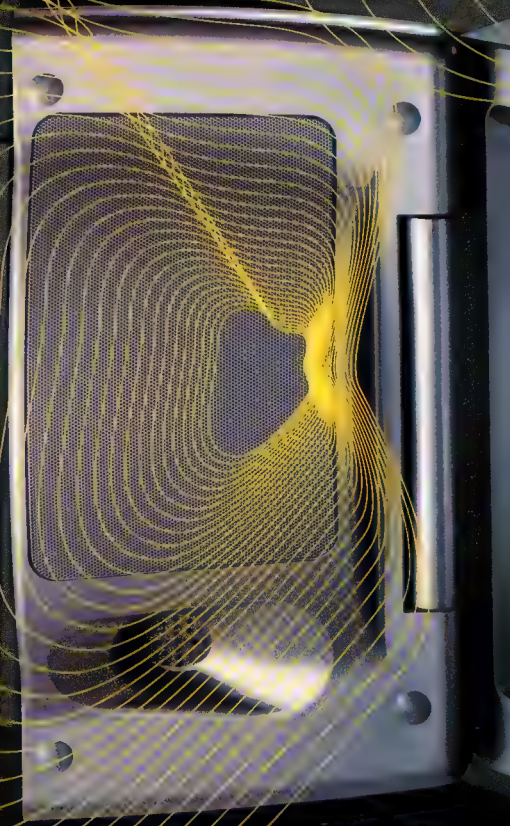

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December 1998 Coming soon

Compiled by: John Stockhausen

PlayStation
Nintendo 64
Game Boy
Saturn

November

Beavis & Butt-head do Hollywood - GT Interactive	Action
Carrot Crazy - Infogrames	Action
Cool Hands - Take 2	Misc
Disney's A Bug's Life - THQ	Action
Gex 3D - Crave Entertainment	Action
Men in Black - Crave Entertainment	Action
Montezuma's Revenge - Take 2	Action
NBA Jam 99 - Acclaim	Sports
Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus - GT Interactive	Adventure
Pitfall 3D - Crave Entertainment	Action
Quest for Camelot - Nintendo	Action
Reservoir Rat - Take 2	Action
Rugrats - THQ	Action
Small Soldiers - THQ	Action
Titus Junior - Titus	Action
Turok 2 - Acclaim	Action
Trouble - Infogrames	Action

WWF War Zone - Acclaim	Action
Yoda Stories - THQ	Adventure
Buck Bumble - Ubi Soft	Action
Fox Sports College Hoops 99 - Fox Interactive	Sports
Glover - Hasbro Interactive	Action
Golden Nugget - Westwood Studios	Misc
Mia's Astro Lanes - Crave Entertainment	Sports
NBA Jam 99 - Acclaim	Sports
NBA Live 99 - EA	Sports
NFL Quarterback Club 99 - Acclaim	Sports
NHL Breakaway 99 - Acclaim	Sports
Rush 2 Extreme Racing USA - Midway	Racing
Superman 64 - Titus	Action
Top Gear Overdrive - Kemco	Racing
Turok 2 - Acclaim	Action
Twisted Edge Snowboarding - Midway	Sports
WipeOut 64 - Midway	Racing
Zelda: Ocarina of Time - Nintendo	Action/RPG
Animaniacs Ten Pin Alley - ASC Games	Sports
Apocalypse - Activision	Action

Asteroids - Activision	Action
Backstreet Billiards - ASCII	Simulation
Black Bass with Blue Marlin - Hot B	Sports
Brave Fencer Musashi - Square EA	RPG
Brigandine - Atlus	RPG
Bushido Blade 2 - Square EA	Fighting
Bust-A-Move 4 - Natsume	Puzzle
Capcom Gen SF 2 Collection - Capcom	Fighting
Centipede - Hasbro Interactive	Action
Colony Wars: Vengeance - Psygnosis	Action
Crash Bandicoot: WARPED - SCEA	Action
DarkStalkers 3 - Capcom	Fighting
Dead in the Water - ASC Games	Action
Disney's A Bug's Life - SCEA	Action
Dual Heroes - Electro Source	Fighting
Formula 1 98 - Psygnosis	Racing
Game of Life - Hasbro Interactive	Misc
Guilty Gear - Atlus	Action
Jeopardy! - Hasbro Interactive	Misc
Kensai: Sacred Fist - Konami	Fighting

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Say What?

Dialectizer Edition

"Ah doesn't be hankerin' t'be in th' habit of reckonin', 'Oh, eff'n ah make this hyar gal wif mo' trimenjus breasts she'll look better in a videogame.'"
- The Neverhood's Doug TenNapel, on the Lara Croft syndrome, spoken in Redneck.

"We gots'ta be dere and every promise I've made, we gots'ta deliver. Ah be baaad..."
- Sega President Bernie Stolar prepares to put his money where his mouth is, spoken in Jive.

"All the bloomin' art, code, right, design, right, and sound in the chuffin' world don't do yer any good if the game is buggy, obscure, or too difficult ter control."
- Oddworld's Paul O'Connor, on the testing phase of Abe's Exoddus, if it were said in Cockney.

"Ewectwonic Awts, headqwawtewed in San Mateo, Cawif., is the wowwd's weading intewactive entewtainment softwawe company. De company devewops, pubwishes and distwibutes softwawe wowwdwide fow pewsonaw computews and advanced entewtainment systems. Oh, dat scwewy wabbit!"
- Description of Electronic Arts, as if it were said by Elmer Fudd.

Visit http://www.rinkworks.com/dialect/ to get your own words or phrases Dialectized.

Knockout Kings - EA	Sports
NBA Live 99 - EA	Sports
NBA ShootOut 99 - 989 Studios	Sports
NCAA GameBreaker 99 - 989 Studios	Sports
Nectaris: Military Madness - Jaleco	Strategy
OddWorld: Abe's Exoddus - GT Interactive	Adventure
Professional Sports Car Racing - Westwood Studios	Racing
Psybadek - Psygnosis	Action
Rally Cross 2 - 989 Studios	Racing
Rollaway - Psygnosis	Puzzle
Rugrats - THQ	Action
Streak - GT Interactive	Action
Superman - Titus	Action
Tai Fu - Activision	Fighting
Test Drive: Off Road 2 - Accolade	Racing
Tomb Raider 3 - Eidos	Adventure
Twisted Metal 3 - 989 Studios	Action
VR Football 99 - Interplay	Sports
Wheel of Fortune - Hasbro Interactive	Misc
Xenogears - Square EA	RPG
Magic Knight Rayearth - Working Designs (Saturn)	RPG

December

Power Quest - Sunsoft	Action
Shangai Pocket - Sunsoft	Misc
South Park - Acclaim	Action
Bust-A-Move 3 - Acclaim	Puzzle
FIFA 99 - EA	Sports
Nightmare Creatures - Activision	Adventure
Star Wars: Rogue Squadron - LucasArts	Action
VR Pool 64 - Crave Entertainment	Simulation
Akuji the Heartless - Eidos	Action
Army Men 3D - 3Do	Action
Clock Tower II: the Struggle Within - ASC	Adventure
Contract - Psygnosis	Action
FIFA 99 - EA	Sports
Invasion from Beyond - GT Interactive	Action
Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete - Working Designs	RPG
Monster Seed - Sunsoft	Simulation
Mr. Domino - Acclaim	Puzzle
Tiger Woods 99 - EA	Sports
Upriser X - 3Do	Action
WCW/nWo Thunder - THQ	Action

January

Roadster '99 - Titus	Racing
Castlevania - Konami	Action
Charlie Blast's Challenge - Kemco	Action
Fighting Force 64 - Eidos	Action
Penny Racers - THQ	Racing
Quake II - Activision	Action
Roadster '99 - Titus	Racing
Starshot - Infogrames	Action
Tonic Trouble - Ubi Soft	Action
Alien Resurrection - Fox Interactive	Action
Big Air Snowboarding - Accolade	Sports
Blast Radius - Psygnosis	Action
Carmageddon 2 - Interplay	Action
Destrega - Koei	Fighting
Elimnator - Psygnosis	Action
Fox Sports Interactive Hockey - Fox Interactive	Sports
Global Domination - Psygnosis	Strategy
Irritating Stick - Jaleco	Action
K-1 Revenge - Jaleco	Fighting
Monkey Hero - Take 2	Adventure
NCAA Final Four - 989 Studios	Sports
NCAA March Madness College BB - EA	Sports
Pro 18 World Tour Golf - Psygnosis	Sports
Quake II - Activision	Action
Silhouette Mirage - Working Designs	Action
Tiny Tank: Up Your Arsenal - MGM Interactive	Action

February

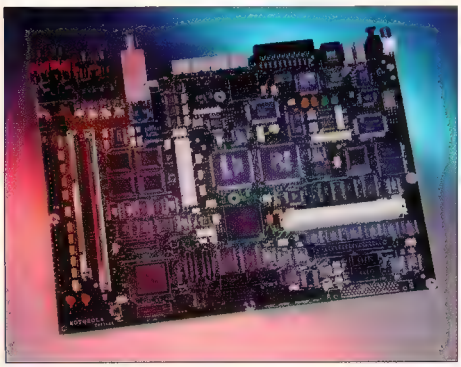
NBA In the Zone 99 - Konami	Sports
NHL Blades of Steel 99 - Konami	Sports
NBA In the Zone 99 - Konami	Sports
NHL Blades of Steel 99 - Konami	Sports
O.D.T. - Psygnosis	Adventure
Shadowgate 64 - Kemco	Adventure
Survivor: Day One - Konami	Action
Beavis & Butt-head do Hollywood - GT Interactive	Action
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver - Eidos	Adventure
NBA In the Zone 99 - Konami	Sports
NHL Blades of Steel 99 - Konami	Sports
Shadow Madness - Crave Entertainment	RPG
Silent Hill - Konami	Adventure
Syphon Filter - 989 Studios	Adventure
War Zone 2100 - Eidos	Action

First Project-X Machine Announced

Motorola has announced its first Project-X-based machine—Blackbird. Combining the power of a network PC with a consumer electronics device, Motorola hopes to carve its niche in the emerging interactive digital media market.

According to Motorola, Blackbird "is the first open platform to support interactive 3D graphics, Java, MPEG digital video, high-fidelity audio, Internet access, electronic commerce and broadband networking in a single integrated unit." Motorola says that it will be as simple to use as a VCR, yet deliver high-end output.

Blackbird uses Project-X, but Project-X as a consumer device is still earmarked for DVD players and should be shipping during mid-1999. The higher-end Blackbird will begin shipping in first quarter 1999.



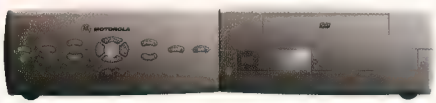
Processing Performance
- over 1,500 MIPS

2D/3D Graphics
- 16 million colors
- Anti-aliased, scaled fonts
- Alpha Blending with 256 levels of transparency
- Primitive 2D drawing functions (Line, Rectangle, Ellipse, Arc, Polygon, Bitblt)
- Gouraud and Phong Shading
- Geometry Transformation, Clipping, Culling and Rendering
- Texture Mapping with Bi-Linear and Tri-Linear Texture Filtering
- MIP-Mapping, Z Buffering
- Advanced rendering algorithms including Ray Tracing, Voxel Rendering, Parametric Modeling, Procedural Textures, Intelligent Caching

Audio
- 32-voice Wavetable Synthesizer
- Invision Cybersound™ full MIDI sample set
- Reverb, Chorus, 3D Spatialization, Prologic™
- ADPCM and PCM Sample Playback

DVD
- DVD Book, VideoCD, CD-DA, DVD Audio compatible
- MPEG 1, MPEG 2 standards
- Subpicture Decode
- Smooth shuttle slow and fast forward and rewind, zoom
- AC-3, MPEG-1, MPEG-2, Linear PCM, DVD Audio (DTS planned)
- 3D Spatialization
- 16 million colors user interface, transparent overlays, PiP

Native Applications
- Broad portfolio of Project-X DVD and down loadable videogames
- Multi-user/networked games
- Two-game controller ports, supporting up to 256 controllers



Everything in one box? Motorola hopes so, as it introduces its high-end Blackbird system, the first device to use Project X technology. Project X's specs are listed above.

At the Arcades

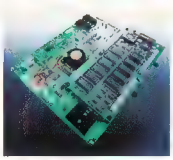
Sega Puts Dreamcast in Arcades

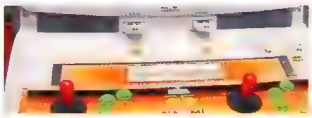
Sega announced the arcade version of Dreamcast at the recent JAMMA AM Show in Japan. Called Naomi, the system is a cheap yet high-performance arcade solution, which will be much cheaper than Sega's Model 3 deluxe arcade machines which can run more than $15,000 apiece. The first Naomi machines will appear in late November, and it's been reported that while Naomi has the same level of capabilities Model 3 has, it costs about one-third the price.

Sega will release 10 to 15 titles for Naomi in the first year, along with games from 20 companies including Capcom, Jaleco and Tecmo. Sega hopes that other companies will adopt the system for their arcade projects, and in turn then bring those games to Dreamcast.

Games for Naomi include The House of the Dead 2: Original Sin, Blood Bullet (House of the Dead Side Story) and Dynamite Baseball. The cabinets for Naomi titles include slots for Sega's Visual Memory System, so in theory you could save your game onto a VMS, bring it home and continue playing or vice versa.

- CPU: Hitachi SH-4, 128-Bit graphics engine, proprietary RISC CPU (running at 200 MHz, 360 MIPS/1.4 GFLOPS)
- Graphics Engine: NEC/VideoLogic Power VR2
- Sound Engine: Yamaha Super Intelligent Sound Processor 32-Bit RISC CPU (64 Channel, ADPCM).
- Main Memory: 32 MB
- Graphics Memory: 16 MB
- Media: ROM boards
- Colors: 1.67 million color palette
- Features: Bump mapping, fog, alpha blending, MIP-mapping, tri-linear filtering, anti-aliasing, environment mapping and specular effects.
- Game port: JAMMA video.
- Optional CD-ROM drive





A closer look at Naomi, its main board, and the front console (with VMS slots).

Live From AMOA

AMOA Wrap-Up

At this year's AMOA in Nashville, Tenn., innovation took center stage. For the first time in memory, the most talked-about games were not all fighting games. Blitz '99 from Midway and Gauntlet Legends from Atari were the buzz on the show floor and Capcom was absent from AMOA for the first time ever. Sega gave us our first look at Naomi—albeit behind closed doors—with House of the Dead 2 and Blood Bullet: HotD Side Story. Blood Bullet is a different game, playing more like Final Fight or Fighting Force than HotD. New titles included an untitled NBA game from Konami, Daytona 2 Power Edition, Star Wars Trilogy, Ocean Hunter and Get Bass from Sega, and Beast Busters 2 from SNK.

Capcom Ends SF3, Alpha

Capcom announced SF3: Third Impact for the arcade. This will be the final installment of the mediocre Street Fighter Three series and will of course have new characters and backgrounds. They also announced that Alpha 3 will be the last in that series, and next will come an entirely new Street Fighter series (including Ken and Ryu no doubt). In a related story, word has it that Street Fighter Alpha 3 will be Capcom's last Saturn title, and will support the 4MB cart.

Jamming it Up at Japan's Annual AM Show

Apart from the current economic turmoil in Japan, arcade operators, especially the smaller operators, have suffered. Print Club fever is already long gone and the cost of new arcade machines is getting more expensive with each passing day. Games have also become too complex and difficult for casual gamers to play and are soon worn out or altered by small upgrade versions of the game. Under these conditions, it's been very hard on the small arcade operators to keep up.

At this year's show, the focus was make it good, make it cheap, and revive the ailing arcade business in Japan. Titles like Beatmania 3rd Mix will surely drive the marketplace for the rest of the year. Capcom showed off Tech Romancer (known as Kikaioh in Japan—the Untitled Capcom Game we told you about in Arcade Previews last month) and Magical Tetris Challenge starring Mickey Mouse. Konami showed off Beatmania 3rd Mix, Dance Dance Revolution, Pop'n Music and Evil Night. Dance Dance Revolution is Beatmania for dance moves, and looks great. Evil Night is a 3D shooter for three players (one of which can use a shotgun). Namco showed off Fighting Layer from Arika, Attack Pura-rail, Race On! and Gunmen Wars. SNK had Beast Busters: Second Nightmare, Samurai Spirits 2 and Shock Troopers: 2nd Squad. Taito was showing off Operation Tiger, Chaos Heat, Densha de Go! 2 and Psychic Force 2012. Tecmo had Dead or Alive ++, Mace: The Dark Age, and Cotton Boomerang. Lastly, Visco showed titles based on the Aleck 64, an arcade version of the N64—Eleven Beat: World Tournament and Star Soldier: Vanishing Earth.

Konami's Dance Dance Revolution requires players to pick up their feet to the rhythm. Music games from Sega and Konami have been huge hits in Japan, whereas not one has been widely released in U.S. arcades.

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LIVE FAST . . . DIE WET

"I WILL destroy you in the Battle mode ....
I WILL destroy you in the two player split screen mode....
I WILL destroy you in the combat cable link mode ....
I WILL DESTROY YOU MAGGOT !"
-SGT.Steel

"When the flag goes down baby your gonna feel the funk of my Disco Fever Ray , You'll be hearin' "Stayin' Alive" til' ya die"
-Ebony Justice

"I will continually upgrade my sinister hearse boat and weapons to extreme necropotent porportions and your weak pale flesh will ROT IN PIECES"
-Dr.Graves

"Look here Son, I WILL use your head as an anchor and your butt as a seat cushion"
-Officer J.B.Nightstick

"We're like totally prepared to like race and win on like all umm... 9 courses , ya know ? so like totally get outta our way"
-Brandi,Mandi & Kandi

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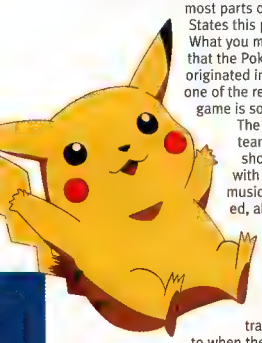
Pokémon TV: Gotta Catch It All

EGM looks at the Pokemon animated series in the U.S.



If you're a fan of Pokémon, you're probably hooked on the TV series that started airing in most parts of the United States this past September. What you may not know is that the Pokémon TV series originated in Japan, and is one of the reasons that the game is so popular there. The U.S. production team gets each show from Japan, with dialogue and music tracks separated, along with Japanese scripts. Each episode takes four to five weeks from when the script translation begins to when the episode is complete (with 12-14 shows in production at any one time). This season there's a total of 52 episodes, with plans for more for next year, a record album of music and, eventually, the movies that have been released in Japan (*Pikachu's Summer Vacation* was just released this past July). Episodes of the show will be available on home video from Pioneer in November.

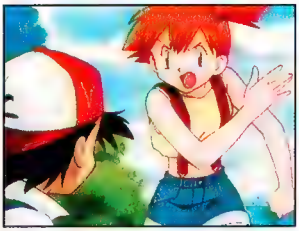
Norman Grossfeld, the show's producer, told us one of the most difficult things to translate is Japanese humor. "Some things are funny there because it's a local Japanese pun or joke that just doesn't translate, yet people are laughing on the screen or there's some big reaction. We've taken whole days just thinking about 'What are we going to do with that?'"

In addition to translation, each episode has been rescored, with music added throughout using both new tunes produced for the U.S. version and arranged versions of the game music from the Japanese show. They match the music to the on-screen action to keep the pace. Scenes with Japanese writing in the background or on signs have been rotoscoped to feature English phrases.

One of the changes that occurred on the Japanese side is that some of the episodes were re-edited after the famed "epilepsy-enducing" episode (#38 of the Japanese show, which isn't being shown in the States) to make Pikachu's electric attacks dimmer and bright lights lower. These changes are very slight and don't detract from the show's story. Grossfeld told us that few things have been edited out of the show to keep it accurate to the Japanese. Even the Pokerap was adapted from a song used in Japan during the show.

Nintendo renamed 75 percent of the Pokémon for the U.S. version, so 4Kids recorded new Pokémon voices—with a few exceptions, including Pikachu, which is the same voice as in the Japanese version. Grossfeld told us "The only time we have to replace it is when Ash or one of the other characters is speaking over Pikachu at the same time."

In the end, the stories of Pokémon is what matters. "The stories don't get enough notice when people talk about Pokémon. It's really driven by the story, and I think that's what is attracting people to the show."



Misty slaps Ash when they first meet in the Japanese version of Pokemon, but not in the U.S. version. Japanese text has been changed to English throughout as well.

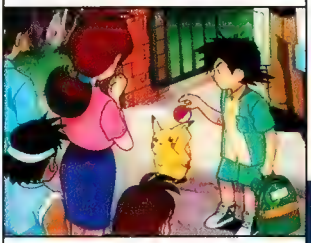
Real Life Pokémon Center

Think games and real life don't mix? Think the Japanese don't take some things maybe just a little too seriously? Think again. Pokémon Center Tokyo is an entire store devoted only to Pokémon goods. Everything from candy to figures to bathing and hygiene products are readily available for the budding (somewhat loony) Pokémon trainer. Located in Nihombashi, the center gets so crowded on weekends that lines form all the way around the block just to get in. Obviously, once in there, you have to buy something with a Pikachu on it.

Pokémon TV Guide

In case you missed the first few episodes, here's a summary of the first eight.

Episode 1: Pokémon, I Choose You!
Ash begins his Pokémon training. He receives a Pikachu from Professor Oak, but this Pika-pal is a stubborn Pokémon, refusing to be friends with Ash. A run-in with Spearows puts Pikachu in danger.



Episode 2: Pokémon Emergency!
Ash races to the Pokémon Center in Veridian City, where Pikachu is nursed back to health. Team Rocket bursts onto the scene to steal rare Pokémon, but with the help of Pikachu, they are defeated.

Episode 3: Ash Catches A Pokémon
After plenty of trying, Ash catches a Caterpie. It takes an immediate liking to Misty, who hates bugs (but loves Pokémon for some reason). Caterpie helps defeat Team Rocket and evolves into Metapod.

Episode 4: Challenge of the Samurai
Just as Ash is about to catch a Weedle, Samurai challenges him to a fight. Their battle is interrupted by a swarm of Beedrill, and in the ensuing confusion Ash sadly loses Metapod.

Episode 5: Showdown in Pewter City
Misty and Ash end up in Pewter City, where Ash challenges the city's Gym Leader, Brock. After a loss, Ash energizes Pikachu and goes back to take care of Brock. Brock ends up joining the group in their quest.

Episode 6: Clefairy and the Moon Stone
The adventurers run into Seymour the Scientist, who is studying the Clefairy and the fabled Moon Stone. When Team Rocket shows up, they help the Clefairy defeat them and protect their precious stone.

Episode 7: The Water Flowers of Cerulean City
Our friends end up in Cerulean City, where Ash challenges the three Sensational Sisters to a Pokémon match to gain his second badge. Misty counterchallenges Ash to a battle, but Team Rocket intervenes at the last minute.

Episode 8: The Path to the Pokémon League
After leaving Cerulean City, Ash and his friends drop by A.J.'s private training gym. A.J. trains his Pokémon extra hard (and is undefeated in 99 matches). Checking his ego at the door, Ash realizes he has a lot to learn.

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Live From Tokyo

The Autumn Tokyo Game Show proves that new hardware doesn't always mean surprises.

This year's Tokyo Game Show, held Oct. 9-11 at Makuhari Messe in Chiba, Japan, was a different show than the last few. Whenever new hardware is available for the public to play, it's exciting. At this show, there were four new systems to check out—Dreamcast being the only traditional console, with SNK's Neo•Geo Pocket, Bandai's WonderSwan and Sony's PocketStation all rounding out the list.

The big companies had new games to show, but nothing that we hadn't already seen or heard about previously. In that respect, this surprise-less show was a bit of a disappointment. The big companies had the usual assortment of titles. Square showed FFVIII, Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon 2, Chocobo Racing (on video), SaGa Frontier 2, Ehrgeiz and Another Mind. Namco had a rather lackluster showing, with R4: Ridge Racer Type 4 being the main attraction, plus Smash Court 2 and Libero Grande. Missing were Tales of Phantasia, Star Ixiom, Ace Combat 3 and Pac-Man 3D, all of which we know are in development.

Konami had the best third-party showing, with Suikoden 2, Hybrid Heaven (N64), Silent Hill, Castlevania 64 (N64) among their ranks. Capcom had Street Fighter Zero 3 on PlayStation (but not Saturn), Marvel vs. Street Fighter on the Saturn, and Magical Tetris Starring Mickey, but no Dreamcast games on the floor other than video of Power Stone and Bio Hazard. Enix's big titles were Dragon Quest Monsters for the Game Boy Color and Dragon Quest VII.

Perhaps one of the biggest let downs was Sony, who just had PocketStation, Crash 3 and Intelligent Qube Final to show. Where was Gran Turismo 2 or PaRappa 2?

Saturn games were virtually nonexistent at the show, with PlayStation remaining as the dominant system. The N64 isn't doing well either, but seemed to have more titles at this show than the Saturn. Game Boy Color seemed to pop up quite a few places, with new games from Compile, Imagineer, Tomy and Enix. Plenty of "me too" games showed up, too, with the survival horror genre being one of the newest crazes. It was followed by RPGs and the ever-popular (in Japan) life simulation.

Tekken Dreamcast?

In what was easily the most surprising announcement made at the New Challenge Conference, Namco officially announced their plans to support the Dreamcast. No titles have been mentioned yet, but it's expected that since the company is also developing Naomi-based arcade games that these titles will surface first. Likely candidates are the System 12-based Soul Calibur and more importantly the much-rumored Tekken 4 which is likely to be the firm's first Naomi title.

Sony Gets in Your Pocket

Sony's biggest attraction at its booth wasn't a game, it was PocketStation (previously known as the PlayStation PDA). It will launch the PocketStation on Dec. 23 in Japan. The system looks similar to the popular Tamagotchi, and acts as a standard memory card to save games, a clock, a calendar, or, as a minigame system. Players download games from PlayStation discs to the PocketStation, which allows them to be played on its miniscreen. Sony says that 31 PocketStation-compatible titles will be released early in 1999. PocketStation will be released in the United States in spring 1999.

One interesting idea made possible by the built-in calendar would be to have special date cheats that would only activate on specific days of the year (for example you could play as Santa Claus on Dec. 25). Previously, PlayStation titles haven't been able to do time-released secrets due to the lack of a built-in clock.

Although the units are small, they will come with some interesting functions. The PocketStation comes equipped with a 32-Bit RISC processor, a small LCD display, a speaker, and infrared transmission and receiving capabilities (for head-to-head games). When released, the device will sell for 3,000 yen (US$21).

Titles that have PocketStation compatibility include Crash 3, Street Fighter Zero 3, Theme Aquarium, Final Fantasy VIII, IQ Final and Monster Farm 2, among many others.

Blow those alien creeps a new PIEHOLE

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MIDWAY

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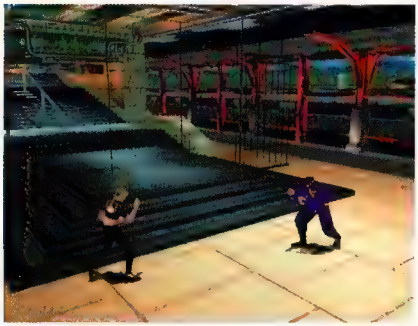
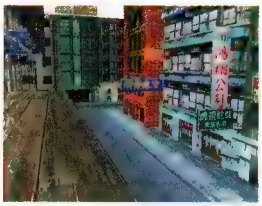
Virtua Fighter 3tb

Guaranteed to be the one game everyone buys along with their Dreamcast, Virtua Fighter 3 Team Battle is an incredible-looking game that easily matches the performance of the successful arcade machine. Taking the second revision of the game as its basis, VF3tb features all of the standard gameplay modes from the original game and adds the Team Battle Mode. Here, players pick three different fighters and then play in a "Survival Mode" style as they battle against their opponent's team. Once a fighter is defeated, he/she is removed from the roster and the next fighter steps in.

Graphically, as with everything else on the Dreamcast, the game is hard to fault when compared to similar games on home systems. The level of detail in both the characters and the backgrounds is quite astounding, and seeing it all run at 60 frames per second is certainly a treat.

If this is what first-generation Dreamcast games are like, we shudder to think how impressive games will be in two years.





Sega Rally 2

Surprisingly, Sega decided against showing playable code of Rally 2 despite the game being a confirmed launch title. All exposure of the game both at the New Challenge conference and at the Tokyo Game Show was in the form of video presentations of a number of tracks.

That said, the game is looking extremely impressive. As you can see from these screenshots the level of detail is absolutely incredible—easily matching the kind of thing you see in high-end, 3D-accelerated PC titles at the moment. Imagine this moving at a steady 60 frames per second, and we're sure you'll agree that this stands to be the most impressive racing game ever released on a home system.

IMPRISONED IN DARKNESS
A CENTURY AGO...
"...A SPECTACULAR GAME"
Next Generation
"THIS GAME IS GOING TO ROCK"
PSM
"THIS GAME LOOKS TO BE THE DEFINITIVE SPACE COMBAT GAME ON ANY SYSTEM"
Electronic Gaming Monthly
"...A WILDLY DEEP GAME"
Next Generation Online
"IT WILL LIKELY RANK AS ONE OF THE TOP ACTION GAMES OF '98"
GamePro Magazine
"...YOU HAVE MANY REASONS TO GET EXCITED ABOUT COLONY WARS: VENGEANCE™"
PSM
"COLONY WARS: VENGEANCE™ SHOULD REDEFINE THE SPACE SHOOTER GENRE AGAIN"
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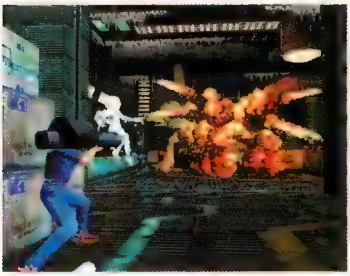
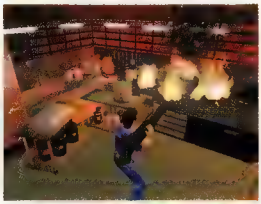
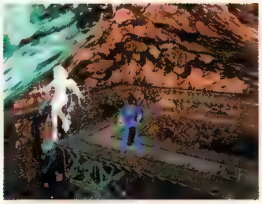
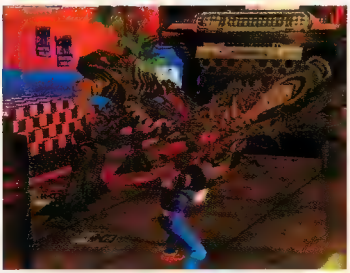
First Look: Blue Stinger

One of the most impressive "surprise" titles on Dreamcast, Blue Stinger is an action game very much in the style of Resident Evil. However, all of the environments you see in the screenshots on this page make use of the 3D engine...nothing here is prerendered. Gameplay consists of exploration, puzzle solving and a lot of combat—and everything is bursting with some incredible-looking special effects.









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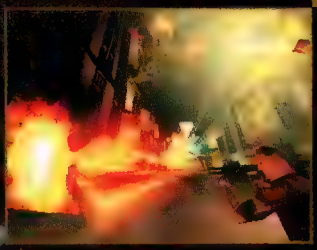

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FEATURING FEL/ATLANTIC RECORDING ARTIST POE AS PLAGUE. LOOK FOR POE'S NEW CD RELEASE THIS WINTER.

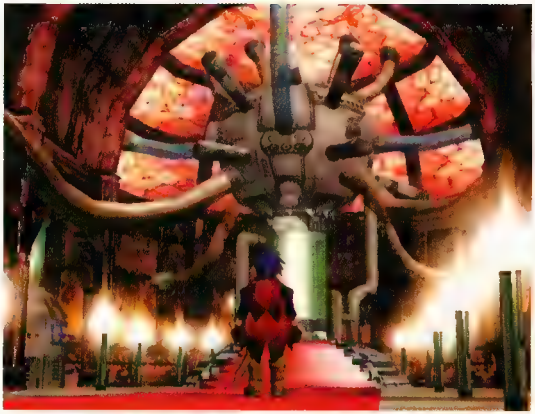
First Look: Climax Landers

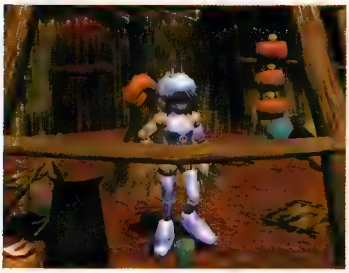
Climax Landers is another RPG from Climax, the company behind the incredible Land Stalker (Genesis) and the somewhat original racing game Felony 11-79 (PlayStation).

Unlike the Stalker series, Climax Landers is a turn-based RPG with auto-generated dungeons (who knows how this will turn out, but there haven't been too many good randomized dungeon RPGs in the past—only the likes of Diablo have been able to pull it off).

As you can see from the extremely cool-looking screenshots, this one's set in a traditional RPG world with the standard swords-and-sorcery theme.

What sets Climax Landers apart from other RPGs is that you can capture monsters and transfer them to a monster farm. These monsters can then be zapped across to the Dreamcast VMS, where you can train them and generally screw around with their minds. The back story of the game is not known at this time, but we do know it will have characters like Ryle from Land Stalker or Lady from Lady Stalker. Climax Landers for the Dreamcast is slated for the end of this year.





THE FUTURE
HAS ONE TINY
HOPE FOR
SURVIVAL

Capcom Announces First Dreamcast Titles

Resident Evil and Power Stone become the first game announcements from Capcom

Capcom announced Dreamcast support at Sega's conference with two games—Bio Hazard (a.k.a. Resident Evil) Code: Veronica and Power Stone. Both will be released sometime in 1999.

Bio Hazard: Code Veronica (Bio Hazard is the Japanese name of Resident Evil) may not be Resident Evil 4, but it's definitely 2.5. The game takes place three months after Resident Evil 2, with players once again controlling Claire Redfield. She gets abducted after traveling to Europe to find her brother and is taken to a tropical island. Of course, an army of the living dead begins appearing on the island and now you've got to escape and find out who was behind your kidnapping.

Unlike the previous two games, Veronica features real-time polygonal environments, which brings a lot more possibilities to the series. For instance, there's a first-person viewpoint and moving cameras if you prefer a third-person perspective. Dramatic lighting, shadowing and skin effects are all used so that characters that look like they're made of polygons are gone.

Power Stone is a one- or two-player 3D free-roaming action fighting game that will appear first in the arcades as the first Naomi title from a third-party company. The game is set in the 19th century, and players can roam around and pick up objects, using them as weapons against opponents. Arenas are larger than Ehrgeiz, but smaller than Bushido Blade, with both indoor and outdoor areas.

www.capcom.com

Pocket-Sized Arcade

At the SNK booth, only two games in the entire area were in color (Athena for the PS, and King of Fighters '98 for the Neo•Geo). Everything else was related to their new portable game machine, the Neo•Geo Pocket, which is due to be released in eight different designs on Oct. 28 (Platinum White, Platinum Silver, Camouflage Brown, Marble Blue, Platinum Blue, Carbon Black, Camouflage Blue and Crystal White). The unit itself is really nice. It's small (not as small as Bandai's Wonder Swan), light, and the lever-like control stick (which has a nice smooth analog feel to it) is a very cool idea for a portable.

Eight games were playable at the show: The King of Fighters R-1, Melon-chan no Seichou Nikki, Pocket Sports Series: Neo•Geo Cup '98, Pocket Sports Series: Baseball Stars, Renketsu Puzzle, Pocket Sports Series: Pocket Tennis, Master of Shogi and Cherry Master. Later on, SNK will release The King of Fighters R-2, which will be compatible in some form with the Dreamcast version of The King of Fighters, which is currently in development. Exactly how it will be compatible isn't known.

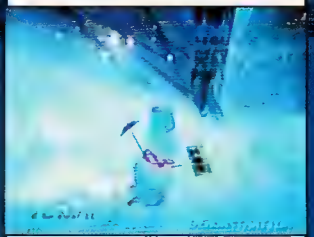
We were told that the Neo•Geo Pocket will be coming to the United States in April 1999, after previous reports that the system would not be released stateside.

www.neo-geo.co.jp

Tidbits

We think of imports as Japanese games, but in Japan, imports are U.S. and European games. They also get import magazines, as shown by this shelf at Messe Sanoh, located on the main strip of Akihabara in Tokyo.

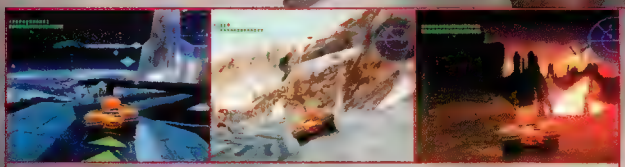
One of the oddest games at the Tokyo Game Show was Tondemo Crisis, by the company of the same name. The object here is to go through different minigames and "save" members of your family from impending danger.



Uep Systems announced that it will bring Cool Boarders to the Dreamcast next year. This snowman demo was unplayable, but looked great.

WHO THE !*#% YOU CALLIN' TINY?

"Tiny Tank's effects are some of the most impressive seen on a PlayStation... the game itself is a technical wonder."
Next Generation



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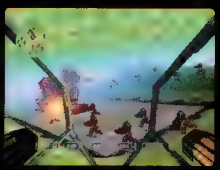
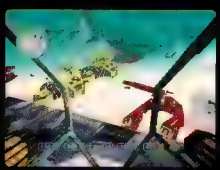
Deploy.

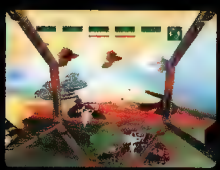
Destroy.



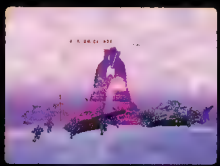
Destructive Weaponry



Intense Combat



Lead and Level Everything



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WonderSwan Takes Flight

Bandai's new system has a silly name

Game Boy has dominated the handheld market for many years, but if Bandai has its way, that won't be the case anymore. Bandai unveiled WonderSwan, its black-and-white handheld system, just before the Tokyo Game Show. Set for release in March 99, the WonderSwan is a little bit different than the Game Boy, but has at least one similarity.

WonderSwan was developed through a partnership between Bandai and Gunpei Yokoi's company, Koto Laboratory. Yokoi himself actually helped design the system, but sadly he passed away during its development. The company carried on and finished his work, even creating a puzzle game called Gun Pey in memory of the master inventor and original creator of the Game Boy.

The WonderSwan is tiny and light enough to fit easily into a pocket (and to make you forget it's even there). At 110 grams, it's extremely light and portable. The screen is able to display 224x144 dots on its 2.49" screen in eight shades of black and white.

The system can be held in two ways—one vertically (for puzzle games and other such titles) or horizontally, for standard games. It's very easy to hold, but the control scheme seems a little simplistic.

Bandai commented that the frankly ludicrous name WonderSwan is a worldwide name for the system, with a possible release in the United States if there are games that would be right for the market. The system will cost you 4800 yen (about $40). Fifty games are currently in the works, with an impressive array of third-party titles. By Oct. 1, 30 companies had signed on to make games for the machine. Games will set you back about 3000-4000 yen (approximately $25-35) each.

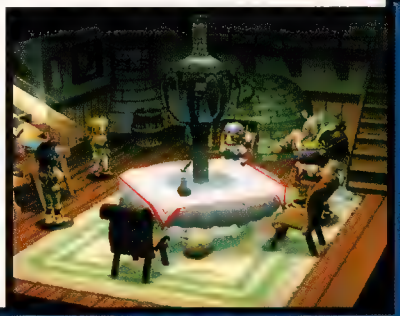
Titles include a couple from popular licensees—Puzzle Bobble from San Denko, Densha de Go from Taito and Side Pocket from Data East. But the most surprising titles are from Squaresoft, Capcom and Namco—Famista (baseball), Klonoa, Tekken, Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon and Pocket Fighter (which is being adapted by Bandai).

Grandia II

The original Grandia was an extremely popular RPG on the Saturn that made effective use of 3D polygonal backdrops, but with 2D sprites overlayed on top. The mood was always somewhat "chirpy" by usual RPG standards, but it proved to be a big hit.

Grandia for the Dreamcast (the full title is yet to be confirmed—as we go to press Grandia II is just a guess) will be somewhat different. Already confirmed as being a "proper" sequel and not a remake or remix of the earlier game, details are currently very sketchy. What we do know so far is that a) the mood is going to be much grittier and darker this time around and b) the graphics engine now makes use of high-quality 3D polygonal backdrops AND 3D character art.

Expect to see more details of this in the coming months. It's encouraging to see that Sega isn't making the same mistakes as Nintendo in trying to woo the Japanese market. By the end of the year there are at least three quality RPGs set for release. Alongside the high caliber franchise and arcade titles, the success of Dreamcast seems more and more assured with each announcement.



Peripheral Visions

Sega unveiled plenty of peripherals to go along with the system. Here's a rundown of everything announced so far (with a few cool surprises).

Visual Memory System - 2500 yen ($21)
Available: 11/27
Sega's hybrid PDA/Memory Card. Plugs into a slot on the controller and can be used as a file manager (back-up data) and a personal viewer (for example, to view plays during sports games).

Dreamcast Controller - 2500 yen ($21)
Available: 11/27
Sega's Dreamcast controller features both a digital pad and an analog stick, as well as seven buttons (A, B, X, Y, L, R and START).

Racing Controller - 5800 yen ($48)
Available: 11/27
Similar to the Racing Controller for the Saturn, Sega's DC Racing Controller is a sleek table-mounted steering wheel that works with Sega Rally 2 and (presumably) all future racing titles. One to check out at launch maybe?

Arcade Stick - 5800 yen ($48)
Available - 11/27
Again, this one is just like the one that came out for Saturn at its launch, only more durable. The stick has a nice feel to it, and there are six buttons laid out Street Fighter-style on the top (A, B, C, X, Y, Z), as well as a START button. There are no L or R buttons (presumably replaced in this case by C and Z). A must-buy for VF3tb fans.

Mic Device (Provisional Name)
Available - TBD
Similar to Nintendo's Japanese Voice Recognition headset for the N64, this microphone device will allow users to "talk" to their games. According to the press materials it can be used as a "voice effective unit" or a "voice communicating unit."

Fishing Controller (Tentative Name)
Available: Feb. 1999
To be launched along with the port of "Get Bass" in February, this new fishing controller (which is shaped like a fishing rod) features a vibration motor, sensor and reel. Something for the fishing enthusiast...but maybe not "normal" people, eh?

Dreamcast Keyboard - 4500 yen ($37)
Available: 11/27
A keyboard for use with the DC to make preparing e-mail, browsing the Web and inputting text easier. Invaluable. Entering text with a joypad isn't fun.

VGA Box (Provisional Name)
Available: 1999
An RGB convertor that will allow you to hook your DC up to a PC monitor, allowing for some seriously hi-res game playing (normal TVs aren't capable of fully showcasing the Dreamcast's hi-res abilities).

Puru Puru Pack (Tentative Name)
Available: 1999
The Puru Puru Pack is a force-feedback pack that is inserted into the second slot on the controllers. It makes the controller shake when something like a punch, kick or crash occurs in the game. It won't require additional batteries, but why wasn't this just built-in off the bat?

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Quartermann

Video Game Gossip & Speculation

As is the norm around a big show like the Tokyo Game Show, a lot of the rumors become reality. Take a look through this month's news and you'll see vindication of a lot of the stories that the Q and his spies have dug up in recent months. For the moment—the new wave of game consoles continues to be the lead gossip out there, so let's start out with the one everyone wants to know about...

The Rumor - PlayStation 2 may be announced as early as Q2 1999 and the announcement will verify all of the other rumors about the system—namely the DVD drive, the backward-compatibility and the 3D rendering hardware.
The Truth - European games trade newspaper *MCV* reports that Sony will make an announcement as early as the next Tokyo Game Show (Spring 99). The report also suggests that Sony will make some kind of formal announcement around the time of the Dreamcast launch in Japan. This is all stuff that Q-Mann has spoken of before, but what is more interesting is that the report in MCV contains a categorical denial from Sony that the new console will be backward-compatible. Current speculation as to the hardware specifications continue to revolve around a DVD system with proprietary technology (owned by Sony) and 3D rendering hardware capable of generating 10 million polygons a second or more (more than double the power of the Dreamcast or current Voodoo 2-equipped PCs).

As an addition to this, the Q's spies spoke to a number of developers prior to TGS who all dropped hints that part of their trip would involve time with the R&D team at SCEI to talk about the new machine.

The Rumor - Prince of Persia 3D was to be released on Dreamcast until Sony came along and offered massive incentives to Red Orb to can the project and run it as a PlayStation 2 game only.
The Truth - A port from PC to DC would be extremely easy for Red Orb if it wanted to make a fast buck. If Sony is hungry to spoil things for Sega though, a game as impressive as PoP3D would be a good project to steal. The Q's sources at Red Orb were adamant that the conversations were started in the late summer.

The Rumor - Turok won't make the move to Dreamcast...it will remain a Nintendo and PC-only franchise for Acclaim and Iguana.
The Truth - This one depends on who you talk to. The team at Iguana has asserted that Turok is a specifically Nintendo-lead product and that while they have used the Turok 2 engine as a way of testing the Dreamcast development kits...the game itself won't ever make the move. Interestingly, Dave Dienstbier and his crew have given some indications of the power of Dreamcast by comparing polygon counts between the N64 and potential Dreamcast versions of the engine running at the same frame-rate. Most characters in Turok 2 on N64 use in the region of 500 polygons. The same creatures on Dreamcast could each be 10,000 polygons—2,000 of which could be used to make up the faces of the characters.

The Rumor - In a related story, the Q's spies have learned that Acclaim has a number of games in development for Dreamcast. Likely candidates being South Park, Extreme G 2, Forsaken 2, QB Club 99 or 2000, NBA Jam, or even Shadowman. The real rumor-mill circulates around Turok...but you've already read about that.
The Truth - There are four games in development due for release around the U.S. launch of the system. No titles have been revealed as yet.

The Rumor - Despite announcing an awfully long time ago that there would never be another Alone in the Dark game on any system, and that things would be called quits with a nice, round number three—Infogrames is producing Alone in the Dark 4 for Dreamcast.
The Truth - Yep. How could anyone deny the success of games like Resident Evil? And who could possibly ignore the fact that they own a franchise that's very similar and would benefit from a graphical overhaul? Apparently not Infogrames. Watch for Alone 4 in early 2000.

-The "Q"

GRRL Gamer!

By Nikki Douglas

Picture Duke Nukem for a moment. OK. Big, tough-looking, Dolph Lundgren type. Good build, cool sunglasses. Now just for a moment imagine him in a speedo. Oh, man. Not a speedo. What if this image and other images of Duke were all over the Net and even encouraged by some of your favorite (or not so favorite) gaming mags. Duke in cute little revealing outfits everywhere you turned. You just couldn't respect the guy, could you? You'd have to turn your back on him and say, brother, put on some clothes!

Welcome to the world of the female game enthusiast circa 1998. We've got Lara, Aya, Red Lotus (who wears a g-string with her sword), anime cuties like the girls in Final Fantasy VII and more to deal with out here and frankly it's getting kind of irritating. So in case you were wondering what women like, I've made it simple for you by summing up in five points everything we DON'T like about the current status of women and videogames.

Five Things That Turn Women Off to a Videogame

T & A

There's so much of it permeating our culture that it would be nice if there was one T&A free zone where women could just enjoy themselves without having to think too much about their boobies. We wish gaming could've been that place but I for one still think we have a chance, because guys who are serious gamers are smarter than the average knuckle-draggin', SPAM lover who actually thinks that Deer Hunter's a challenge. It is to those guys, the brainy ones with itchy trigger fingers that we implore—make games that women will like too!

Kill everything you see

Even though I love first-person shooters, they can get quite tedious after a while. An FPS with a plot would be breakthrough because it's cool when you have to do more than actually kill everything in your way. Like maybe, having to think, deduce, strategize. Now that would be interesting. After all, how many times can you see some alien dude blow up and smear the walls before it's kind of, you know, ho-hum?

Dark, dreary, mechanical settings

I'm thinking Metal Gear Solid could use a little brightening up—women understand ambience—we like it too, but every once in a while if a game broke with the whole film noir MOODY factor it would be creative. Like, remember blue skies, maybe a cloud floating by? I'm not talking flowered meadows or anything, just something that's organic.

No choice to play a female or male character

There should be an option to play either a male character or a female character in a game, particularly in an adventure game or first-person shooter—that's what made a game like Resident Evil so much fun. Women like to play in a form they can identify with. And we need more than just Lara Croft and her daisy dukes.

The gross-out

This is just NOT the way to reach women, although some of us (myself included) do enjoy an all-out bloody fragfest. But for most women, the gross-out will turn them away from a game quicker than you can say, "Myst is in the closet under all the old *Playboys*."

You see we just want to play too and play games that don't mock or belittle us, or that come wrapped in pink packaging for our protection. Women want to have a good time playing games, just like guys do.

I hope this helps. Rest assured you'll be seeing more from me on the female gamers perspective in the future, but for now excuse me 'cause I've got to see if I can find a Nude Duke code for A Time to Kill.

Nikki Douglas is the headgrrl in charge of GrrlGamer (http://www.grrlgamer.com - www.grrlgamer.com), the world's only gaming publication for women and girls.

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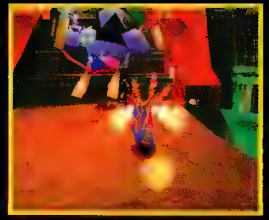

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Sheep makes case on national TV!

One hot sheep!

Embittered sheep stages anti-Spyro protests.

(Story on page 3.)

SPYRO the DRAGON

EVERYONE E ESRB

PlayStation

www.playstation.com

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Top 20

The Top-20 Best-Selling Games of August, 1998

			Last Month
1	WWF War Zone Acclaim	PS	2
2	WWF War Zone Acclaim	N64	NEW
3	Banjo-Kazooie Nintendo	N64	1
4	NCAA Football 99 Electronic Arts	PS	NEW
5	GoldenEye 007 Nintendo	N64	7
6	Gran Turismo Sony Computer Entertainment	PS	3
7	Waialae Country Club: True Golf Classics Nintendo	N64	NEW
8	Madden NFL 99 Electronic Arts	PS	NEW
9	NFL Xtreme Sony Computer Entertainment	PS	8
10	Mission: Impossible Infogrames	N64	4
11	NFL GameDay 99 989 Studios	PS	NEW
12	Tekken 3 Namco	PS	10
13	Super Mario 64 Nintendo	N64	13
14	Mario Kart 64 Nintendo	N64	14
15	Mortal Kombat 4 Midway	N64	6
16	Tomb Raider Eidos	PS	17
17	Mortal Kombat 4 Midway	PS	5
18	Crash Bandicoot Sony Computer Entertainment	PS	18
19	Road Rash 3D Electronic Arts	PS	9
20	F1 World Grand Prix Nintendo	N64	NEW

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games, August, 1998. Call them at (516) 625-2345 for questions regarding this list. Top 5 game descriptions written by the *EGM* staff

1 WWF War Zone (PS)

With the ability to create wrestlers as diverse and interesting as good ol' Elephant Sak here, it's no wonder War Zone is selling through the roof! With the big football games coming next month (Madden, GameDay, etc.), will it be able to keep the top spot?

8.5	8.0	7.5	7.5
Dan	Dean	John R	Shawn

2 WWF War Zone (N64)

Did we call it last month or what? The N64 version of War Zone is even better than the PlayStation one. It'll be around the list for a while...at least until Revenge hits.

7.5	8.0
Shawn	John R
8.5	8.0
Dan	Dean

3 Banjo-Kazooie

It was a brief stay at #1, but it sure was well-deserved. Who knows, by this time next year you may be reading about Banjo-Tooie in this very spot.

9.5	9.5
Shawn	Crispin
9.0	9.5
John D	Dan

4 NCAA Football 99

Let the football wars begin! You knew NCAA was gonna show up quickly, and we guarantee you'll see Madden or GameDay (or both!) around here next month.

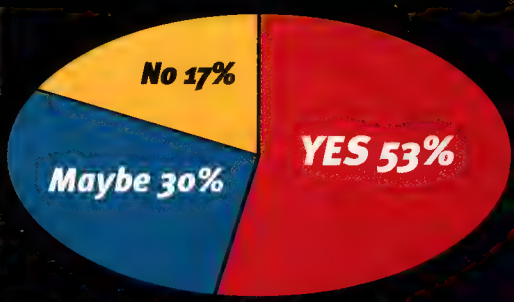
9.0	8.5
Kraig	Dean
9.0	8.0
John R	Dan

5 GoldenEye 007

1997's Game of the Year just won't go away! After all this time, (well over a year now) 007's creeped back into the Top 5. We can't argue with this one...

9.5	9.5
Crispin	Shawn
9.5	9.0
Dan	Sushi

Would you upgrade your TV for gaming?



Source: Videogames.com Poll October 14, 1998

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Top 10 Editors' Picks

1	Metal Gear Solid	Konami
2	Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus	GT Interactive
3	Xenogears	Square EA
4	F-Zero X	Nintendo
5	Pokémon	Nintendo
6	Rogue Trip	GT Interactive
7	MediEvil	SCEA
8	WCW/nWo	THQ
9	Body Harvest	Midway
10	Spyro the Dragon	SCEA

Top 10 Japan

Courtesy of *Famitsu* Magazine

as of Sept. 20, 1998

1	Dragon Quest Monsters	Enix
2	Itadaki Street Gorgeous King	Enix
3	Pocket Monsters (Pikachu Version)	Nintendo
4	Kido Senkan Nadeshiko: The Blank of 3 Years	Sega
5	Metal Gear Solid	Konami
6	Pilot Ni Narou!	Pack-In Soft
7	Shining Force III Scenario 3	Sega
8	Blaze & Blade Busters	T&E Soft
9	Namco Anthology 2	Namco
10	The King of Fighters '98: D.M.N.E.	SNK

Top 10 Arcade Picks

1	Soul Calibur	Namco
2	Daytona 2: Battle on the Edge	Sega
3	NFL Blitz '99	Midway
4	Gauntlet Legends	Atari Games
5	Street Fighter Alpha 3	Capcom
6	Time Crisis 2	Namco
7	Street Fighter EX 2	Arika/Capcom
8	Sega Rally 2	Sega
9	Carnevil	Midway
10	Marvel Vs. Capcom	Capcom

Dreamcast Who and What List

ASC Games
ASCII
Atlus
Bandai
- Mobile Suit Gundam

Bing Kids
- Harukaze Sentai V Force 2

Bizarre Creations
- Metropolis
- Furballs

Bottom Up
- Oozumou (sport)
- Entertainment Golf (sport)

Capcom
- Bio Hazard-Code: Veronica
- Powerstone

Compile
- Puyo Puyoon

C Lab
Climax
- Climax Landers

Climax Graphics
- Blue Stinger

CRI
- Aero Dancing (flight sim)
- Great Buggy (racing)

CSK
- Aero Dancing
- Great Buggy

Culture Brain
- Hiryu no Ken/Flying Dragon

Daikoku Denki
Data East
ESP
- Shinki Sekai Evolution

Fortyfive
- July

General Entertainment
- PenPen Trilcelon

Genki
Gremlin
- Actua Soccer - Gremlin
- Actua Golf - Gremlin

Hasbro Interactive
Hudson
- Kitahe (Heading North): White Illumination
- Elemental Gimmick Gear

Human
Imagineer
- Incoming

Infogrames
- Alone in the Dark 4
- Looney Tunes
- Outcast

Japan Corporation
- Nijiiro Tenshi

Kagatech/Naxat
- Mahjong

Kadokawa Shoten
Koei
Konami
Media Ring
Media Works
Midway
- Mortal Kombat 4 Special Edition
- NFL Blitz

NEC Home Electronics
- Sengoku Turb
- Seventh Cross

NEC Interchannel
- Mercurius Pretty
- Monster Breed

Nihon Bussan
Nihon Computer System
Pulse Interactive
Quest
Rage
- Incoming

Riverhill Soft
Sega
- Akihabara Denno-Gumi Pata Pies!
- Cho-Hamaru Golf
- Climax Landers
- Denno Senki Virtual On
- Geist Force
- Get Bass
- Giant Glam: Wrestling
- Godzilla Generations
- House of the Dead 2 (Naomi)
- House of the Dead Side Story (Naomi)
- Let's Make Pro Soccer Club
- Let's Make Pro Baseball Team
- Project Berkeley
- Sega Rally 2
- Sonic Adventure
- Virtua Fighter 3tb
- World Series Baseball 2000

Shouei System
- Digital Horse Racing Newspaper Special Tie-In

Sieg
- Crack 2

SNK
- The King of Fighters '98

Starlight Mary
Sting
Taito
Takara
Tecmo
- Dead or Alive 2 (Naomi)

Ubi Soft
- D-Jump
- Monaco Grand Prix
- Rayman 2
- Speed Busters

UEP Systems
- Cool Boarders

Victor Interactive Software
Video System
- F1 World Grand Prix

Ving Kids
Warashi
- Shienryuu 2 (shooter)
- Dynamite Robo (action)

Warp
- D2

Winky Soft
Xing

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SOLAAR:
A strange and powerful magic healer

JULIA CHASE:
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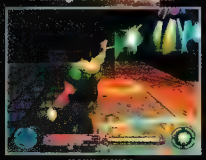

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PC CD ROM

PlayStation

PSYGNOSIS

TEEN T AGES 13+ CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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O.D.T

OR DIE TRYING

The citizens of Calli are about to be wiped out by a deadly epidemic. But to find the mystical green pearl that can save them, you must run a suicidal gauntlet through a massive tower. There are only two ways out: Alive and very dead. And there are plenty of hideous creatures in your way who are voting for dead. One thing's for sure, survival isn't pretty.

- Plunge into the bizarre 3-D worlds of O.D.T. It's part magic, part mayhem.
- Make your way through 8 intricate levels and more than 70 treacherous sectors.
- O.D.T. is an intense action adventure game that lets you choose from four characters — Lt. Ike Hawkins, Julia Chase, Maxx Havoc and Solaar — with different strengths, abilities and special moves.
- Confront your own mortality with endless fighting combinations, including hand-to-hand, weapon or spell combat.

THE INTENSOR™ SURVIVAL GUIDE

(Because we're not always going to be there to hold your trembling, sweaty little hand.)

PART ONE

Be warned: this is technology with a real "punch-you-in-the-gut-while-you're-not-looking" brand of sensitivity.

There's never been anything like Intensor. So in order to survive it, you need to understand a few things. Like to begin with, you need to know what a Sensory Gaming Experience is. It's complete immersion. It's intense tactile feedback. It's being able to see, hear and feel the game you're playing like never before. All you have to do is hook it up to the audio jack of any system, play any game and hold on. You may also want to say a little prayer.

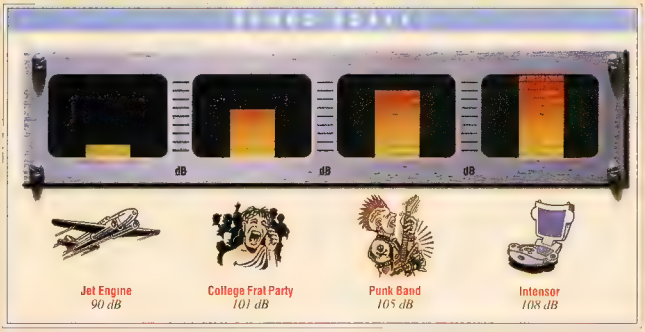
Fig. 1. *A breakdown of what you're up against.*

#	ITEM
1	Left 2" Mid-Range Directional
2	Right 2" Mid-Range Directional
3	5.25" Center Mid-Range
4	5.25" Low Frequency Tactile Driver
5	High-Range Tweeter
6	Sound Volume
7	Tactile Intensity
8	Electronics Unit
9	Heavy-Duty Single Cord Connector
10	Optional Office Chair Base
11	Optional Subwoofer
12	Headphone Jack

PART TWO

Remember, in this chair no one can hear you scream.

Not everyone will have what it takes to handle Intensor's patented audio system. After all, we're talking 5 high-performance built-in speakers with 108dB output. Technically speaking, that means it's really loud. So for the neighbors' sake, you may want to use the headphone jack — which you can do without losing any tactile feedback. But keep in mind — if your ears start bleeding, you should probably turn the thing down.



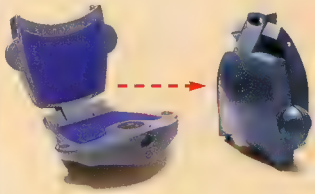


Fig. 2. *At 19 pounds, Intensor is designed for quick evacuation in the event things get ugly. (Shaky hands will appreciate the built-in molded carrying handle.)*

PART THREE

Ducking, dodging, whimpering and other useful gaming skills you might want to perfect.

Be advised. With Intensor, you'll not only hear your games like never before, you'll also feel them. In your back. In your legs. You'll feel sensations in places you never even knew you had. Which means every engine rev, every explosion, every kick will seem more real than you may want it to. So it's important to note that under this type of extreme duress, screaming in high-pitched tones for one's mommy is quite common.

DEFENSIVE PROCEDURES

Fig. 3a.
The Dodge

Fig. 3b.
The Weave

Fig. 3c.
The Duck

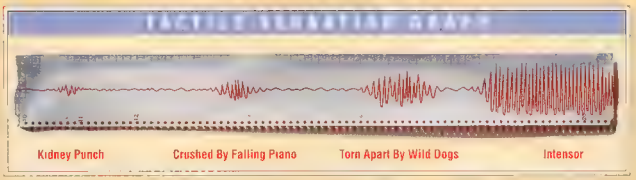


Fig. 4. *Artist's conception of Sensory Gaming's effect on the human heart. Those with heart conditions should proceed at their own risk.*

Fig. 5. *Note: Players attempting to negotiate Intensor on anything less than a good, stiff spine may be reduced to a vegetative state.*

PART FOUR

Any game. Any system. Any medium. After this, nothing will ever be the same.

From movies and CDs to all your favorite games, Intensor isn't just compatible with your current system, it actually transforms it. It may also do the same to you. Once you take a seat, there's a new awareness. And there's no going back. It's the gaming version of the thousand-yard stare. You'll recognize it in others who've "been there." Seek them out. Talk to them. This therapeutic approach can help preserve your sanity.

Fig. 6. *Intensor has been known to induce shock. In such cases, place victim flat on back, elevate legs 8 to 12 inches and call for help. (If victim begins vomiting, place him or her on one side to allow fluid drainage.)*

In the event of nervous breakdown, seek help at

www.intensor.com

Assuming you've read this carefully, proceed to your favorite gaming retailer.

Sensory Gaming Experience

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GOOD NEWS: you designed the perfect racetrack

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BAD NEWS: it's down there

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PlayStation

Game Directory
- Earthworm Jim 3D
- Battle Tanx
- Milo's Astro Lanes
- Glover
- Lode Runner 64
- Virtual Pool 64
- Superman 64
- Roadster '99

Earthworm Jim 3D

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Interplay Vis Interactive	1 Action	60	1st Qtr. 1999

Web Address: www.interplay.com

The Final Earthworm Jim Game?

Earthworm Jim has always been one of those characters who is surprisingly a lot more popular than you'd expect. Although not in the ranks of the Marios and Sonics of this world, he's certainly a number of steps above the Jersey Devils, Spyros, Bubsys and Aero the Acro•Bats (remember him?).

After selling some serious numbers on the 16-Bit systems, it was long thought that due to the lengthy hiatus, Jim was gone forever. Thanks to Scottish developer Vis Interactive though, a "final" episode is set for release before the end of the year. We say "final" (because Interplay is asserting the fact), but chances are that if this one is successful we'll probably see at least a few more.

So what's in store? Well, immediate assumptions can be made from the title; this one's in 3D...thanks to a fortunate arrival at the third installment in the series coninciding with the necessity for all N64 games to be in 3D.

As ever, the underlying concept is a bit on the wacky side. Apparently, a severe blow to Jim's head has sent him completely barking mad, and he now finds himself trapped within the confines of his own psyche. Completely unconscious, but trapped within a world of his own weird fantasies, Jim will have to explore the 3D platform-like recesses of his mind in order to try to fix his brain.

To do this he must wander through "themed" bits of his dreaminess, and each of the themes deals with certain psychological, um...thingies. There's stuff he loves, stuff he hates and stuff he's always wanted to do mixed up with lots of things from his memory. Hence we find characters and situations from the previous 2D games, such as Psycrow, Evil the Cat, Professor Monkey-For-A-Head and Number 4. All this stuff is mixed with The Bovine Special Elite, which are psychotic, gun-toting cows (obviously), Disco Zombies—which kind of speak for themselves and weirdness like baked-bean lava flows, supermarket shelves full of corn flakes and toxic fairgrounds.

The gameplay mechanics are obviously the kind of thing you'd expect from a game of this nature. Jim runs, jumps and does the usual kind of stuff that goes with the platform-game-hero gig. Like a number of other (notably European) recent N64 titles of this nature though, the subject matter and humor is what will set this apart from the Marios and Banjo-Kazooies. It's all a bit surreal, but it's nice to see that the whole design of the game, right down to the puzzles, echoes the weirdness. This isn't just a game with trippy visuals, it's weird all the way to the core.

6,000

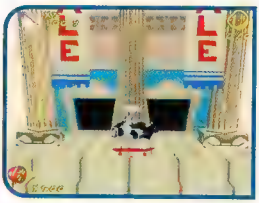
The known number of species of earthworms, or (to use their proper name) Annelids.

The graphics suffer significantly less from that N64 fuzziness than most other games on the system.

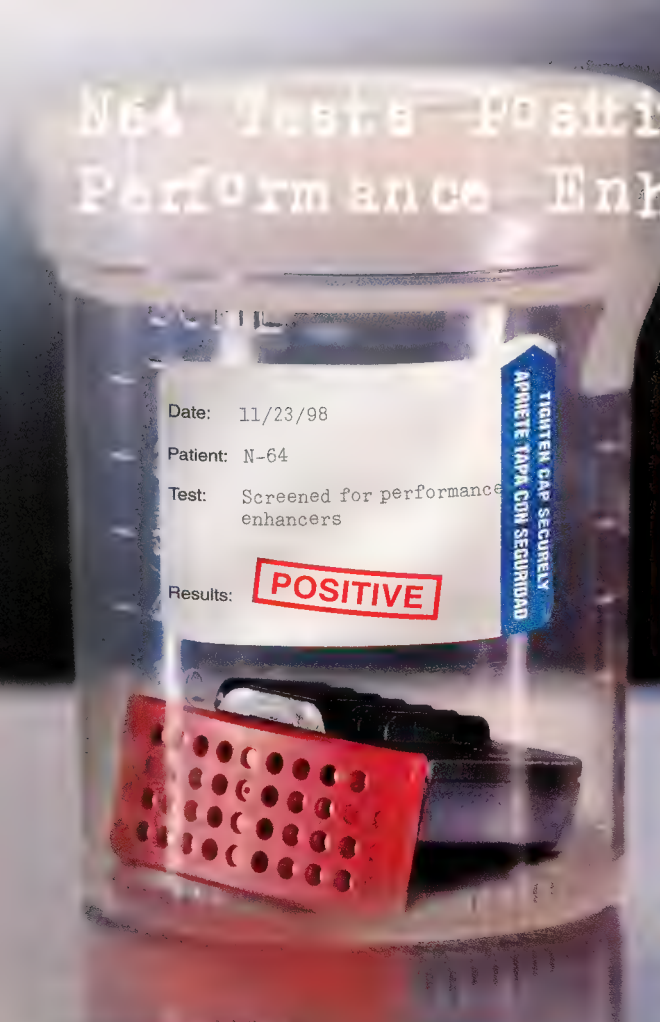
Techie Stuff

A mix of polygons and voxels

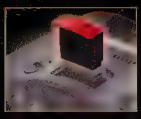
Unlike many other games in the 3D genre, EWJ3D manages to look pretty unique thanks to the originality of its subject matter and the inherent cleverness of the technology used. By mixing the usual textured polygons with voxel technology (volumetric pixels, a way of rendering graphics that is better for smooth lines), the overall result is a much smoother and more "natural"-looking environment. As you can see from the screenshots, the game doesn't suffer quite so badly from that blurry, fuzzy look that so many N64 games do.



N64 Tests Positive for Performance Enhancers.



The secret is out. The N64 is playing with an unfair advantage. A new supplement for select games called the N64® Expansion Pak. That gives the system the amazing strength to pump higher res graphics. Go heavy on colors. Push more complex AI. Power larger levels. Or hold massive worlds. It gives you a definite edge. In fact, it's almost like cheating. So cut out the coupon. Look for the Expansion Pak Icon on N64 games. And juice up



Right now, check out the higher res graphics created by the N64 Expansion Pak, on these two games.

MANUFACTURER'S COUPON EXPIRES 3/31/99

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
3DO 3DO	1-4 Action	70	March 1999

Web Address: www.3DO.com

Battle Tanx

Tank Fightin' Action, Don'tcha Know!

This winter, wargame buffs with an N64 will be able to engage in brutal tank-based combat, courtesy of 3DO. Set in the year 2001 AD (oooh!), the human race has dwindled to a sweaty-palms-inducing ratio of 1,000 men per one woman. Naturally, the women are the most valuable commodity left and the men have been reduced to snarling savages whose only remaining instinct is to fight. As a BattleLord, it's up to you to protect the QueenLord (usually a hot-looking Duke Nukem-style chick) from the Tribesmen who would usurp her and take her for their own.

Your main line of defense (or offense, depending on how you look at it) consists of several lethally equipped vehicles, like the Battle Tanx, the lighter but faster tank-cycle, and the heavily armored Goliath tank. Scattered around the environments are numerous power-ups (all the better to destroy your opponents with) such as guided missiles, flame-throwers, swarmer missiles, mines, cloaking-devices, turbo-boosters and nuclear armaments. Health-packs are also in abundance, which is good, since you'll be taking more than your fair share of the damage.

As with any decent multiplayer game, there are a variety of ways to play Battle Tanx. Among the modes on offer here are the prerequisite Deathmatch, which you can play with up to three other friends, or solo, against CPU-controlled opponents. In Battlelord Mode, gameplay is basically modeled after capture-the-flag, where the objective is to capture the enemy's Queenlord, while preventing them from capturing yours. Last Man Mode is a kill-or-be-killed situation where you simply must be the last man standing. Finally, Campaign Mode takes you through the Battle Tanx story, where you must find your one true love over 17 levels of inhospitable enemy territory, highlighted with hand-drawn illustrations and "FMV" sequences using the game engine.

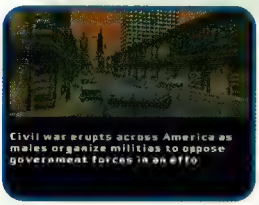
Practically everything in Battle Tanx can be blown up. Why take the high road when you can make your own?

Graphically, the game resembles a tank-based version of Vigilante 8, with its fully destructible landscapes and buildings. Something in your way? Run over it! Need a path where there isn't one? Blow a hole in it! Practically anything in the game can be destroyed with extreme prejudice, and it's particularly satisfying to see a four-story building crumble in a fiery heap as a result of your fine efforts. Your tanks also take on visible damage (like Destruction Derby) each time they're hit, so keep an eye on those "health" bars.

With more than 17 different levels to play through in either Story Mode or in any of the multiplayer deathmatches, replay value isn't a question here. What remains to be seen is whether or not the level design matches the scope of the game's design. With "arenas" modeled after real-life locations like Chicago and New York City, it looks like Battle Tanx has promise.

17

There are 17 different areas in which to engage in mortal combat. As with any decent warfare simulator, the legendary Area 51 makes an appearance.



The rendered intro features an almost FMV level of quality using the game's graphic engine.

There's a large assortment of vehicles, ranging from fast minitanks to lumbering behemoths.

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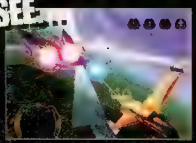

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Crave Player 1	1-4 Action	100	November 1998

Web Address: www.cravegames.com

Milo's Astro Lanes

You Think The People In YOUR Bowling Alley Are Strange...

Bowling on the N64? Shyeah right, that's a genre that's been almost completely ignored (except for Ten Pin Alley and Brunswick Bowling), until now that is. Crave Entertainment is taking matters (and a bunch of balls) into their own hands, it seems, with Milo's Astro Lanes.

Touted as a combination of bowling and miniature golf, while not exactly that, Milo's Astro Lanes hopes to inject some much-needed fun into this non-existent category. In Milo's, you can choose from six strange characters (which include big-headed aliens and robotic female bowlers), six different "nuclear" balls and three different lanes, with additional lanes opening up as you progress. Factor in a "realistic" physics-engine and it becomes apparent that Crave is keeping one eye on the future while keeping one foot firmly planted on the ground.

While it's difficult to figure out exactly where the miniature golf aspect comes in, this certainly isn't your average bowling game. More like a mixture of bowling and WipeOut XL, gameplay is affected by picking up power-ups while your ball spins down the lane. If you have friends playing at the same time (Milo's supports four players total), they can attempt to sabotage your efforts while you try to get that strike. All sorts of special attacks can be used to ruin your game, such as the Bouncy Ball attack, which turns your ball to rubber, or the Pea Ball which shrinks your ball, naturally, to the size of a pea. If that weren't enough, not only do you have those nasty opponents to deal with, you also have to look out for all the obstacles you'll find in Milo's Astro Lanes. Chasms, jumps and lava-filled gutters litter the lanes, so you'll need to keep on your toes, lest that bowling ball of yours becomes nothing more than a pile of ashes.

However, the best defense is a great offense, and with the Booster Ball, the Clone Ball and the mighty White Dwarf at your disposal, you'll be more than prepared to deal with the opposition.

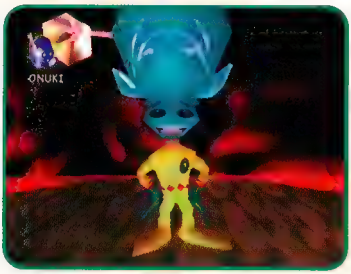
The graphics are well-done, if a bit on the purple side, with a bizarre combination of psychedelic, space-age environments and bowling alleys from hell. Additionally, the characters all look good (if a little goofy), with nice light-sourcing and Gouraud shading in place. If you're pining for 10-pin action on the N64, this is probably as close as you'll get to a bona-fide bowling experience. Just don't expect a hard-core bowling simulation or you're going to walk away disappointed. With a wacky cast of characters and innovative four-player action, Milo's Astro Lanes might become the party favorite this holiday season on the N64. All you need now are the cheesy shoes and black-and-white bowling shirts!

My 2 Cents

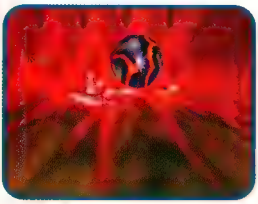
At least it's not a racing game, but Milo's Astro Lanes is a bizarre attempt at coming up with something different. It seems as if they're trying to do a Hot-Shots-Golf-kind-of-thing, but the results aren't extremely promising, thus far.

–James Mielke

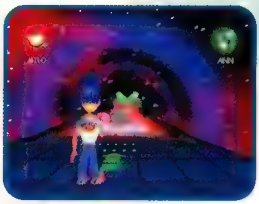
One would expect a robot to have an unfair advantage, but what's with the bug-eyes at the end of the lane?



Onuki is just one of the many unique characters in Milo's Astro Lanes. Looks a little like the Great Gazoo, doesn't he?



If your idea of fun is bowling in a pit of lava, then this game might be "right up your alley." Ouch.



You won't find "lanes" like this in your hometown. At least I hope not.

Hey, there are plenty of games for people who watch football for the cheerleaders and half-time shows. For the true fan, there's VR Football.

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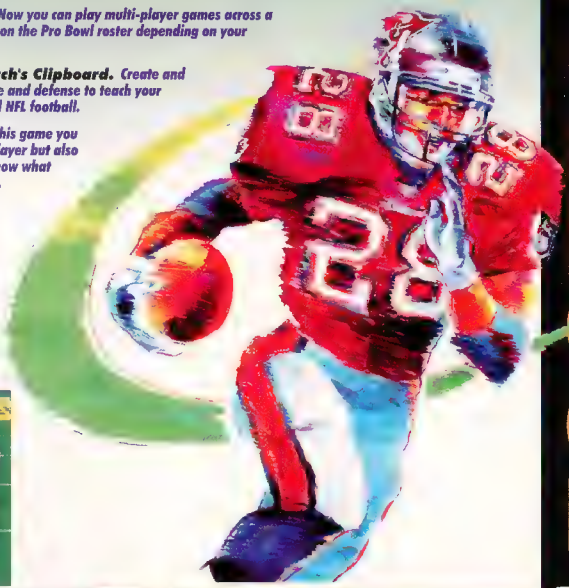

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Hasbro Interactive Interactive Studios	1 Puzzle/Adventure	80	October 1998

Web Address: www.hasbro-interactive.com

Glover

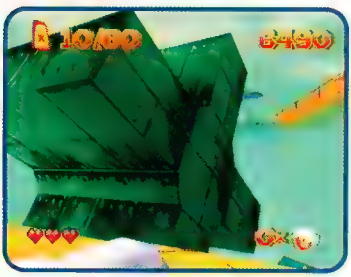
Get A Good Grip On Your Ball

Once upon a time in a land far, far away, there was a wizard who created all kinds of potions. One day, there was an accident and it caused an explosion that scattered seven crystals integral to the kingdom's well-being. Luckily, one of the wizard's magic gloves survived the accident and set out to recover the crystals which had transformed into rubber balls to avoid being shattered. Unfortunately, the wizard's other glove fell into an evil potion and becomes Glover's archnemesis.

A somewhat generic story, but a very unusual game. You control Glover who moves exactly like a person until he makes contact with one of the rubber balls. With a ball in hand, Glover can bounce, throw, slap, ride, push or simply let go. The various obstacles you must pass require you to clear the way without the ball, throw the ball over and follow later or move at the same time with ball in tow. A nice feature is the ability to see where and how far Glover can throw a ball via a visual flight guide which appears whenever Glover is about to throw or slap the ball. It eliminates a lot of the guesswork in figuring out where the ball will land. At any time, Glover can transform the ball into other substances other than rubber-like steel. Also, depending on the level, you will be able to turn the ball into more than just one variation. There are seven worlds with more than 20 levels filled with puzzles and obstacles for Glover to clear. Puzzles aren't the only thing our hero has to contend with. There are lots of creatures who are obstacles in themselves.

The graphics are very nice and the levels are designed differently from one another. Considering this is Hasbro Interactive's first Nintendo 64 game, it's quite an impressive debut. More so since this is a full-fledged adventure title with vast worlds as opposed to a videogame version of a board game.

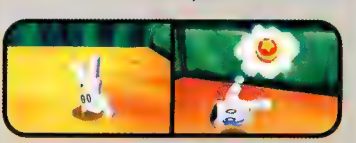
Glover has no problems with shallow water, but deeper depths require him to ride the ball lumberjack-style.



There are some tricky obstacles to clear like this massive spinning gear.

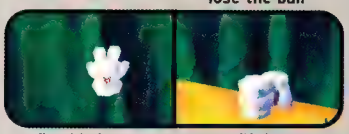
Glover's Tricky Moves

A glove is a pretty versatile object and so is Glover. Here are a couple of his moves:



Cartwheel: Tumbling fun

Ball Point: Helps when you lose the ball

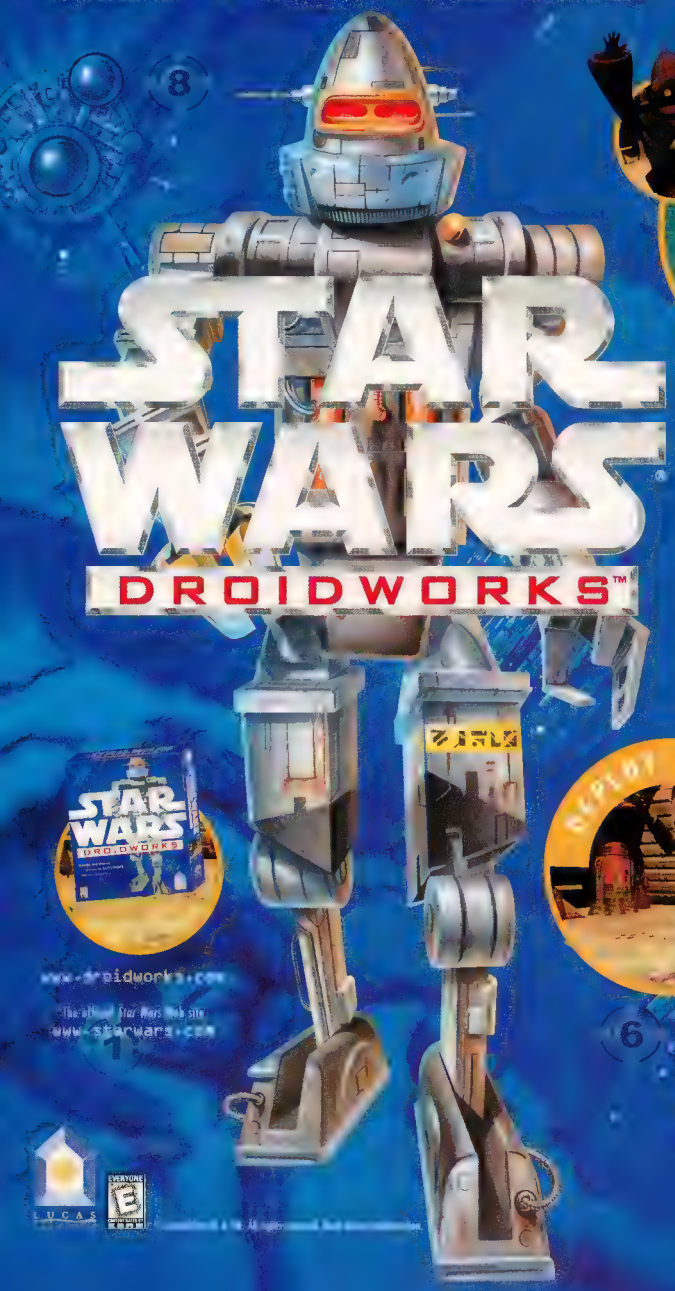


Double jump: For those high ledges

Fist: Pound enemies and switches

Lay Flat: Our personal favorite. Glover gets a nap, but also useful in later levels as a dodge move.

CAN YOUR DROID CUT IT?



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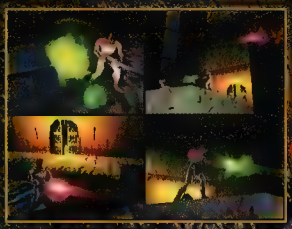
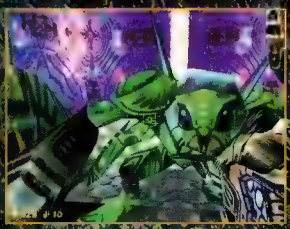


Hunt other players in one of three multiplayer deathmatch modes.



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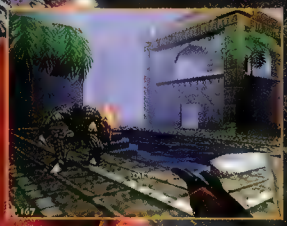
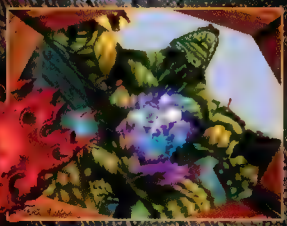
Screen shots shown were taken from the Nintendo 64 version of the videogame.



30 square miles of monstrously immersive and hyperreal single and multiplayer environments.



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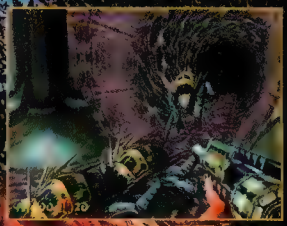

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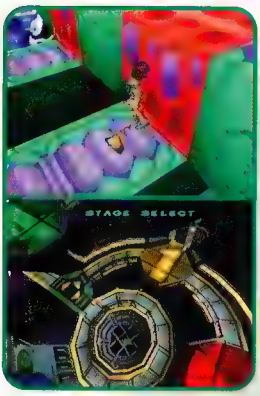
Lode Runner 64

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
TBD Big Bang	1 Puzzle	70	2nd Qtr. 1999

Web Address: N/A

Lode Runner Finally Goes 3D



Way back in 1983, a funky little action-puzzle-game called Lode Runner rocked the computer-gaming world with its innovative design and addictive gameplay. Having landed on nearly every gaming platform in the mid-to-late '80s, it's no surprise that this title has finally found its way to the N64. Lode Runner 64 takes all of the traditional Lode Runner elements and attempts to incorporate them into a 3D world.

Apparently, Lode Runner became stranded on a foreign planet after having left Earth. With his navigational system on the fritz, he needs to gather the appropriate data in order to find his way home. The problem is that the people who have this crucial information, the red-robed monks, are a bunch of suspicious punks who won't give it up. That said, Lode Runner must beat it out of them, while making his way from world to world, gathering stolen riches (i.e., gold) along the way.

Since the game has made the leap into 3D, so too have the "puzzle-style" levels. Instead of simply walking left, right, up and down, you can now walk into the foreground and back, naturally, into the background. The Trigger button fires your laser pistol, while the rest of the buttons manipulate the camera, allowing you to better plan your strategy for each stage. Each stage is constructed of a number of tiles that must be destroyed by using Lode Runner's supply of lasers, bombs, drill bits and Brunswicks. By eliminating the correct tiles, you'll not only be able to carve a path for yourself, but you'll also be able to trap and kill those red-robed monks (that's Mr. Lode Runner to you!).

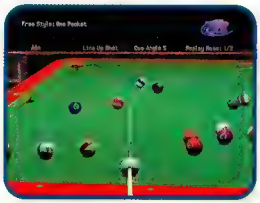
This isn't your daddy's Lode Runner. This classic game from the past has undergone some serious plastic surgery.

The game itself is broken down into five different worlds, with each world being divided into multiple stages, with each stage then having at least four levels. Gasp! In each level, you need to make your way through a puzzle-type path. Once you've collected enough gold, a portal opens up that leads to the next level. While you're at it, you'll need to find Nav-cards that will allow you access to other worlds. The final objective is to meet and defeat the Boss that controls the five worlds. Once that is completed, then you will finally be able to return to Earth.

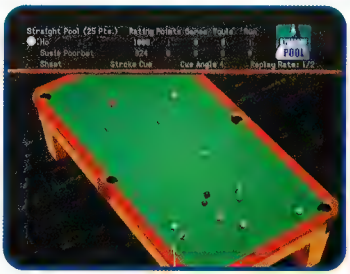
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Crave Celeris	1-4 Simulation	100	December 1998

Web Address: www.cravegames.com

Virtual Pool 64



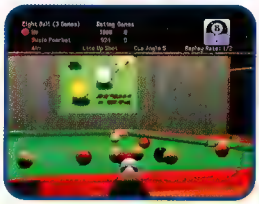
The worst problem in a pool game is if the balls don't react realistically when hit. This isn't the case in Virtual Pool 64.



Those of you out there who fancy yourself a hustler should get ready for Virtual Pool 64 from Crave Entertainment, developed by Celeris. This 3D pool sim features several different modes of play which allow you to play a quick game against the computer or a friend, against a series of computer opponents in a tourney setting or try your skill (or luck in some cases) at trick shots. There is also a Practice Mode so you can fine-tune your skills and get used to the sweet (but different) analog control.

In most of the play modes, there are nine types of pool to stroke your cue to, including 8 Ball, 9 Ball, Bank Pool and Rotation, among others. In addition, American bar, English pub or APA rules can be selected so each of the modes can have a different style of play (or so Johnny England can feel at home).

The physics in the version we previewed is quite accurate, realistically representing what pool truly feels like. The analog control adds to this realism: When you pull back on the analog stick and then push it forward, you hit the cue like you would in real pool. And since it's analog, you can hit it as hard or soft as you like. Virtual Pool 64 also supports the Controller Pak and the Rumble Pak.



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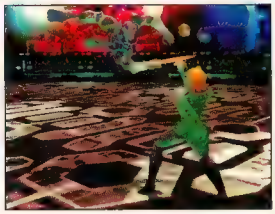

Virtual mode. Choose between classic 2D fighting or brawl in a fully 3D environment.

Published by:
Serious Fun™
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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Titus Titus	1 Action	60	November 1998

Web Address: www.titusgames.com

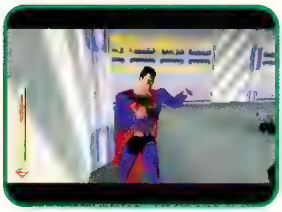
Superman 64

The Man Of Steel Is Pumped And Ready!

It seems only natural that Superman would come out for the N64. After all, he is the most recognized comic character in the world. Titus holds the esteemed license and plans to release their "man of steel" to the legions of Superman fans quite soon.

The story goes like this: Lex Luther and fellow villains—Brainiac, Parasite and Metallo—plot to control Metropolis by enveloping the city in a Kryptonite fog. Superman must put an end to the scheme, as well as rescue Lois Lane, who has been kidnapped by Luther earlier in the scenario.

To aid in his missions of good, Superman has the ability to fly, walk and run really fast. He also packs some mean attacks including: Heat vision, Super Breath (yow) and a wicked right hook. In addition, Superman's super strength comes in real handy. Many everyday objects such as cars, trains, street lamps, etc. become weapons via the ol' over-the-head toss—a classic Superman maneuver.



Check out that X-ray vision in action. Of course Superman would never use that talent anywhere near the ladies room.

One of the more interesting portions of the game puts you in the path of a speeding train—ka pow!

Sixteen mission-based levels must be cleared of villains before the next level can be entered. Clearing a level involves a lot of searching and plain ol' fighting. Superman's X-ray vision is most useful in this portion of the game. Looking through walls to locate enemies is a nice option. If only every game offered this handy feature.

Having played an early version of the game, it looks like Superman could be an interesting play. There are some issues with control but we're confident the developers can iron it all out in time for the game's release. Here's to the man of steel making his debut on the N64—cheers.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Titus Titus	1-4 Racing	60	January 1999

Web Address: www.titusgames.com

Roadster '99

As Titus prepares to launch another racing game, we harken back to how we felt about their first—Automobili Lamborghini. The game was a definite sleeper. It didn't impress at first but it eventually hooked us with its engaging racing gameplay.

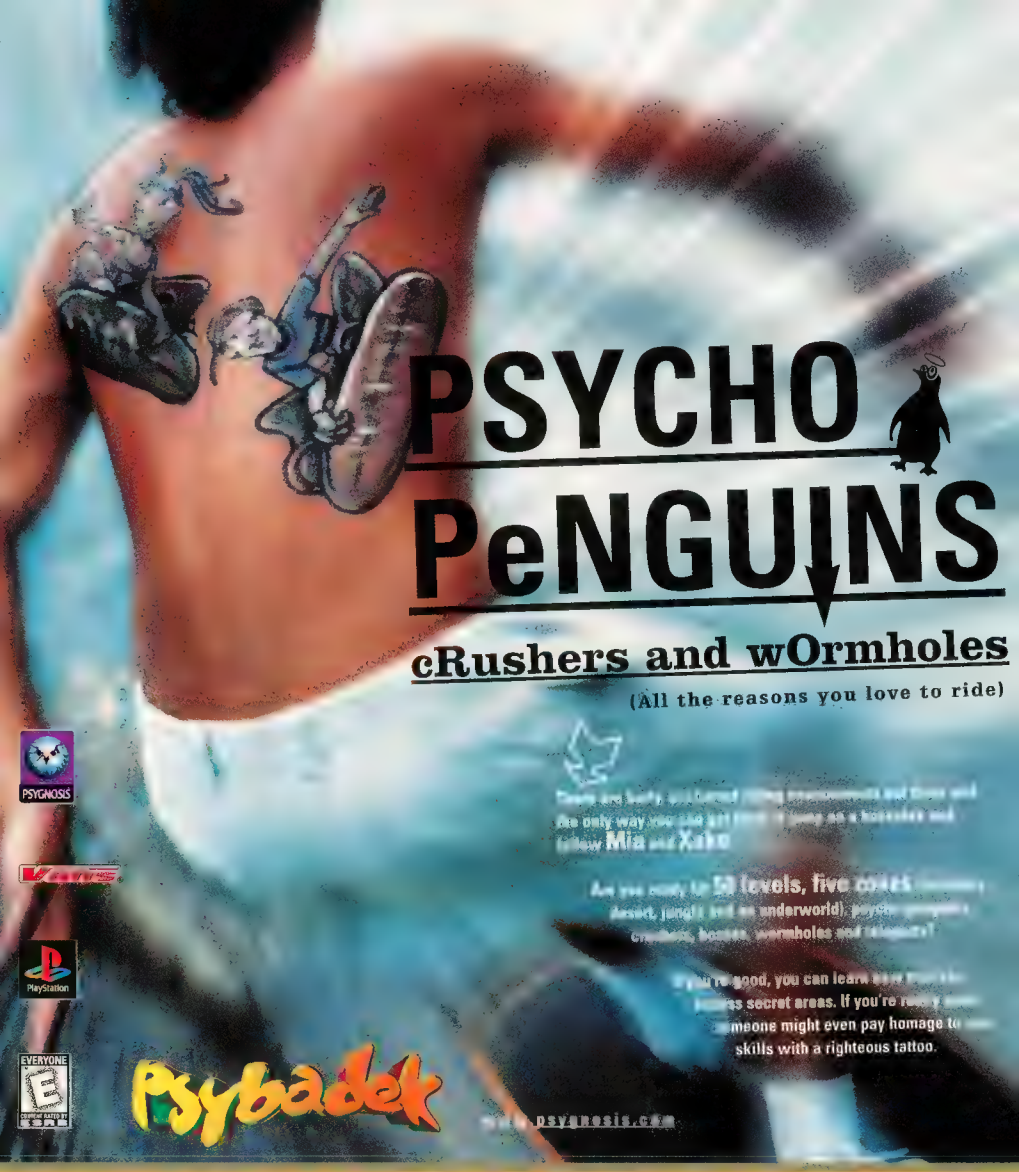
On the other hand, Roadster '99 looks much better right out of the gate. Sharper detail and vibrant colors really make the cars and backgrounds pop. The vehicles look very close to what they're modeled after—Porsche, Lamborghini, etc., only Titus doesn't have the license to those cars so they're not too similar.

Eight tracks featuring mountain, desert and canyon excursions challenge players to place in the top three. The challenge comes from trying to pass on the narrow lanes that permeate the courses. At this stage of the game's development it's quite difficult, but we expect it will get easier before release.

Look for other interesting options such as user-defined steering and certain graphical nuances like skid marks, smoke and plumes of snow in the mountain terrain. If successful, Roadster '99 could have its place among the new generation of good N64 racing games.

As the heir apparent to Automobili Lamborghini, Roadster '99 has the gift of good lineage as well as a nice concept to work with.

Of course the obligatory snow track has to be in the game. Like anyone would race these high-dollar cars in the snow.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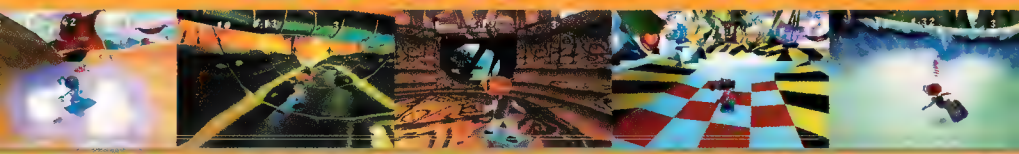

NINTENDO 64

South Park

Control various characters from *South Park* in this 3D first-person shooter from Iguana and Acclaim due out early next year. Besides using the 4MB RAM Pak, allowing for incredible graphics which makes the game look better than the show, it will have a load of weapons, including one weapon that launches a cow, which lands ass-first on top of someone's head and slowly slides down until it engulfs him or her entirely! Sweet!

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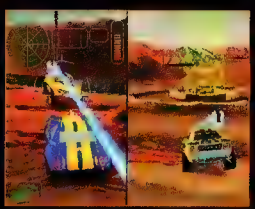

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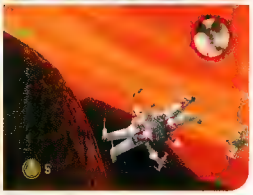
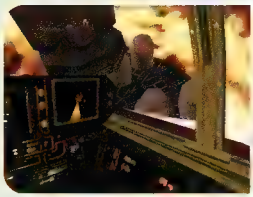
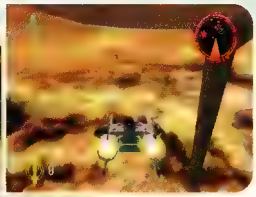
NINTENDO 64

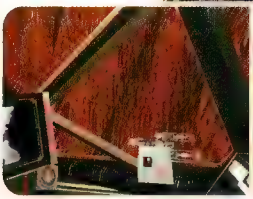
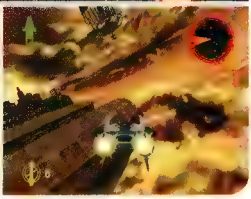
Rogue Squadron

Here's a taste of what to expect graphically from LucasArts' upcoming title. With the 4MB Expansion, Rogue Squadron is looking simply incredible. Let's hope it plays as good as it looks. For a load of info on the inner-workings of Rogue Squadron, check in issue #112 of *EGM*—you know, the one with the cool-looking X-Wing on the cover.







YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE A LOT OF BALLS TO PLAY A GAME THIS REAL

(SIXTEEN TO BE EXACT)

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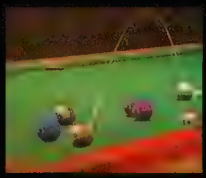
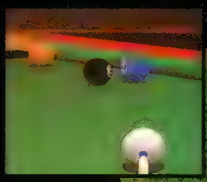
"...Play ultra-realistic pool, without the risk of getting hustled..." - IGN64.com



Master mind-blowing trick shots that would rival any seasoned pool shark!



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Celeris

NINTENDO 64

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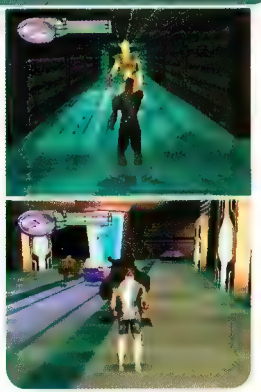
NINTENDO 64

Castlevania 64

Here are some new shots from Konami's 3D update of Castlevania, which should be out sometime in early 1999. This most recent build shows a variety of Bosses—some bigger than the screen—sweet-looking fire effects and more Castlevania-type beasts. In addition, the game's female character Carrie is playable and has projectile magic attacks.

Survivor: Day One

We've just received additional shots from Konami's graphically impressive Noah's Ark-esque action game, which is being developed internally stateside. In it, you control a man who's basically trying to find his other half—a human female. But that's the hard part. While on your way to wherever she is, you'll run into a variety of hostile aliens. Look for this one by the end of the year.



Quake II

Rumor has it id was unhappy with the way Midway handled the original. That's why Quake II is coming to us late in 1998 from Activision and Raster Productions. Aaron Seeler, the project leader for the original Quake, is still on board though. The game may support the 4MB Expansion Pak, but will definitely have an array of multiplayer modes.

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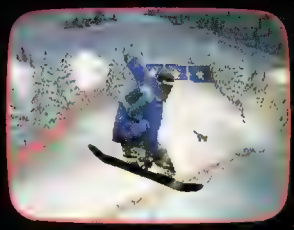

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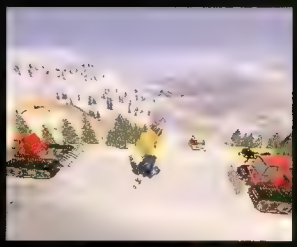

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Twisted Metal 3

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
989 989	1-4 Action	80	November 1998

Web Address: www.playstation.com

What's In A Name?

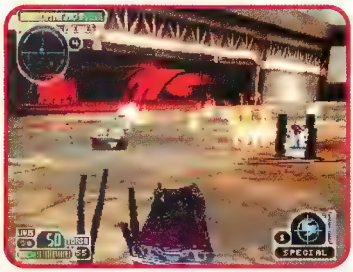
So you want to know if Twisted Metal 3 is a good game? How it compares to Rogue Trip and Vigilante 8? Well, we're afraid you'll have to wait for the answers to those questions in coming months. We can tell you the game is progressing nicely and has that old Twisted Metal feel even though it's being developed internally at 989 Studios instead of SingleTrac, the original team behind Twisted Metal and TM 2. Today, we will explore the question: What's in a name?

It looks as if some of the members of the original cast are returning with a new art style. They include Thumper, Roadkill, Mr. Grimm, Hammerhead, Axel, Warthog and the ever-popular Sweet Tooth. New to the series are Clubkid, Firestarter, Auger and Flower Power. In addition, the Bosses Dark Tooth and Minion are returning. Expect another Boss and other hidden cars as well—possibly a semitruck called Dark Side. All of the cars have a new physics model attached to them, which 989 says is more realistic than previous versions of Twisted Metal...well, as realistic as Twisted Metal can be anyway. Now, when you take corners fast, jump over ramps while turning or drive over certain surfaces (like water, sand or ice), your vehicle will react accordingly.

In addition, all of the cars have their own weapons and special attacks. Like the previous games, each car has a standard machine gun. Special attacks (or combos as they're often called) are performed with up, down, left, right-type D-pad movements and a button. Other weapons can be obtained by driving over a particular icon. Does this sound really familiar? Good—it should.

With all of the games featuring an Area 51 level, you'd think the feds would tighten security at the facility.

With these various offensive techniques you can blow away your enemies with style. Freeze them, then lay into them with your car's unique special attack, or turn invisible and camp out for a couple of seconds unloading a few rockets toward your enemy. Of course, a Twisted Metal game would not be complete without the obligatory interactive environments. For example, in Area 51 (how...um, original) you can trigger four switches inside of an arena. After doing so, a flying saucer that's suspended in the middle falls to the ground, opening up a new area with fresh power-ups. Other locales to devastate include London



Duke it out on rolling dunes and in the great pyramids of Egypt. As you'd expect, there are lots of secrets in the levels.

Dark stages make for bright lighting effects. Each vehicle has standard weapons and flashy special ones.

(sorry Johnny England), Egypt, a post-apocalyptic Los Angeles, Washington, D.C. and Tokyo. Other levels aren't so normal: the North Pole, high above the Earth in a blimp and...Hollywood, the weirdest place of them all. All of the levels have loads of ramps, hills, ledges, holes, secret areas and straight-aways—all of which make for some heavy-duty car-blowing-up high jinks. Well, the holes may not be too fun if you fall to your death—that would just plain suck.

Graphically Twisted Metal 3 has a number of special effects, best seen when explosions occur and special weapons are fired. Something noticeable over older Twisted Metals are the environment graphics. Levels look better than they used to, although the design of them in this early build was a bit chunky. Still, the game's using some nice-looking texture maps on both the machines and the environmental objects. The cars also show various degrees of damage when hit. But when there are dozens of explosions going on around you, who has time to notice?! All of this action goes on at a brisk 30 fps, although in this build it slowed at times. 989 Studios assures us the game will remain at a constant 30 fps (in addition to an even more solid physics model) once further tweaking and play-testing takes place.

Various multiplayer modes will be implemented, including a Four-player Link Mode (for those of you who actually own one...and two TVs, two PlayStations and two copies of the game). Of course, a Two-player Mode will be readily available for us normal folk. Another piece of good news from 989 Studios is the implementation of multiplayer-specific levels, per suggestions made by fans of the other two Twisted Metal games.

Lastly, look forward to a rocking-good soundtrack by Rob Zombie, the former Zombie King of the hard-as-nails metal band White Zombie. When you hear it you'll agree there's something about blowing up cars that goes well with Rob Zombie's music.

The Name Game

Remember, TM3 is no longer being developed by SingleTrac, the company behind Twisted Metal and Twisted Metal 2. Twisted Metal 3 is being done internally at 989 Studios, the same company behind such titles as Running Wild, Cool Boarders 3, NFL GameDay 99, NHL Face Off 99 and a number of others. SingleTrac's "Twisted Metal" game is called Rogue Trip and is available at stores now.

No TM game would be complete without insane Split-screen Multiplayer Modes.

Knock out the switches and open up a secret place within the Area 51 level.

Like Twisted Metal 2, levels in TM3 take you around the world...except this time the cities are 989 style.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Eidos Core Design	1 Adventure	80	November 1998

Web Address: www.eidosinteractive.com

Tomb Raider 3

Lara, Some Triangles, Quad Bikes, New Ears And A Multiple-Choice Question

With the barely contained excitement inspired by the likes of Zelda and Metal Gear Solid this holiday season, it's easy to forget that there are a number of other big games ready for release too. Most promising in the Christmas rush is young Lara Croft and her third adventure. A notable chart topper every year since the PlayStation was launched, it would be safe to assume that Tomb Raider 3 stands a pretty good chance of being up there at the top for just as long as Solid Snake and his cigarette-smoking, box-hiding antics.

As we've mentioned before, you'd be forgiven for initially feeling that things were getting out of hand with this particular franchise. After all, all the Tomb Raiders are starting to look the same, right? Well, in this case—no. While the format is the same...the camera tagging along behind Lara's butt—the execution of both the graphics and the level structure is completely new.

First the graphics. As we reported in our exclusive feature back in issue #109, the engine in Tomb 3 has been completely overhauled. Now making use of particle effects for smoke, flames and wispy bits of mist along with some fancy-schmancy colored lighting, the game looks better than ever. It doesn't end there however, the thing also runs in a higher resolution than before, lending it a sharper, more defined look. Most importantly though, the new team at Core revised the polygon engine to construct everything out of triangles. Now this may not sound like much, but what it means is that much more organic and natural-looking shapes can be made in the environments. Take a look at the screenshots and you'll notice a curvier, somewhat more believable look to the environments.

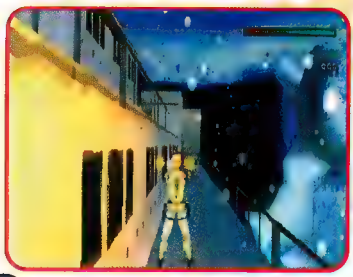
On the structure front, the new Tomb isn't the linear affair it was before. While the action begins in a single location (India), once this is completed you can choose your path through the game. There are 15 levels in all, broken down into five distinct areas. Having completed India, and learned the clues revealed there, you can choose the order you wish to take London, Area 51 in Nevada and the South Pacific

The texture quality is much higher this time, and the triangle engine makes things look more realistic.

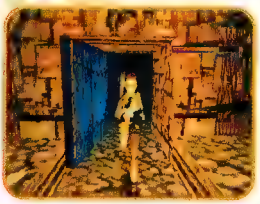
Yeah, OK Lara, there really isn't any need to show off, OK? Stop it with the gun thing, eh?

Surprise! Aliens

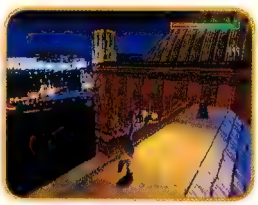
Want to know the story? OK. Meteorite crashes into Earth millions of years ago, result of which is the formation of life on Earth. Polynesian explorers and Charles Darwin subsequently get involved, and ultimately there's a power struggle for control of this object of considerable power. Cut to modern day, and people are still chasing after it...and experiments at Area 51 figure in too—so there's bound to be some alien interest in there.



Don't shoot me! What did I do?



Um...Lara, shouldn't you be going the other way?



The London rooftops offer some of the most notably different environments in the game.

Dark dreams of blood & fire,
of drums pounding rhythm...

here lies the amber cinders of your voodoo...

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[ARTERIES IN HUMAN HEART]

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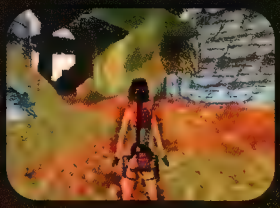


TOMB RAIDER III

NINJA

AKUJI THE HEARTLESS

LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER

YOU'VE BEEN WARNED

New levels feature more day-to-day environments rather than just the great outdoors.

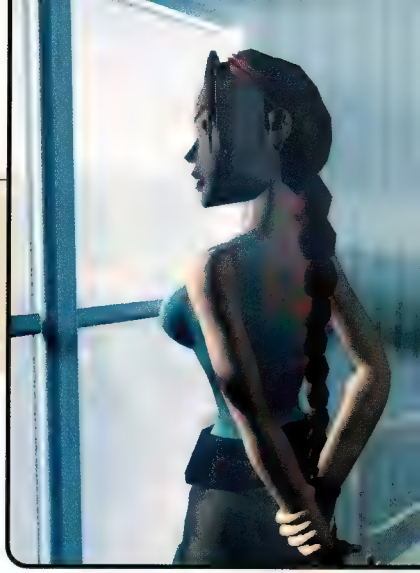
Tomb Raider 3 cont.

Islands, before finishing up in Antarctica for the final showdown. The order in which you take the central meat of the game will affect the challenge you face in later levels, as each area provides different items and weapons that can be taken on to later stages.

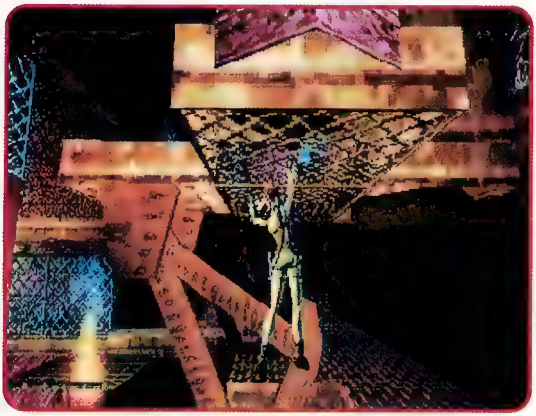
The guts of the gameplay is still your classic Tomb Raider stuff. But, as you'd expect, things have been tweaked and gently fondled to provide a more rewarding experience. The levels are bigger and more "explorer-friendly" than Tomb 2, and while there are more weapons available (and a cool Dual Shock aiming system that utilizes both sticks) the game is much less of a combat-fest than Tomb 2.

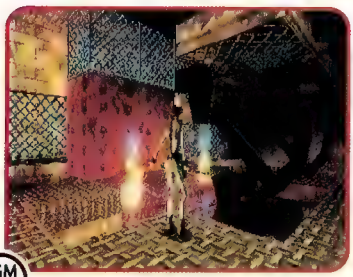
The vehicles are back too...this time you'll see Lara straddling quad-bikes, underwater James Bond-type propulsion thingies, snowcat bikes and in the South Pacific she'll even go whitewater rafting (and the graphics are sweet here...lots of particle engine-driven water effects).

Whether Lara will remain the PlayStation's "number one for Christmas" game girl remains to be seen, but believe us when we say Tomb 3 really is a dramatic improvement over its predecessors.



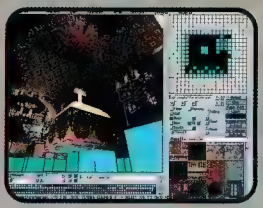
Look...that'll be a new move. She couldn't do that before.



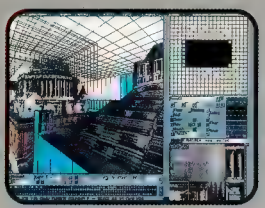


An effective demonstration of the new lighting engine if ever there was one. The flames cast a realistic glow.

Behind the Screens



The new triangle engine means that interiors can be far more detailed. This has lead to some elaborate levels.



The London skyline is beautifully pieced together with the help of the new engine. When lit, it's spectacular.

Come on in, stay awhile... Mind if I cut your head off?

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PlayStation

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TECMO

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Activision Syrox	1-2 Shooter	60	3rd Qtr. 1998

Web Address: www.activision.com

Asteroids

With 3D Graphics And A Lot More

It looks as if we're finally going to get an update of a classic arcade game that does its predecessor justice. Asteroids, developed by Syrox Development for Activision, feels exactly the same as the old game except with new graphics and other innovative gameplay additions. First, the graphics are the feature most improved upon...thankfully, since vectors just don't cut it these days. Backgrounds are vibrant and filled with moving elements, and asteroids are actual polygons instead of chunky vectors. In fact, now all of the graphics in the game are completely polygonal, with texture-maps and the whole nine. In addition, explosions, special weapons and environmental hazards are huge and feature fancy lighting and/or particle effects. On the gameplay side, new elements such as power-ups, "mission objectives" and Bosses have been added. Some power-ups are standard, such as lasers and bigger thrusters, whereas others are much more powerful and have the graphic effects to go with them. There are different types of asteroids to blow up, too—some of which react differently if not destroyed in a timely fashion or if you're too close to them— and several different types of ships to control.

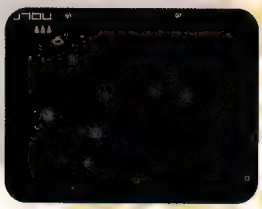
Nice-looking rendered cinemas break up the action and give a glimpse of what's to come in the next zone. Also before each of the zones, a mission briefing tells you what needs to be done to warp to the next level, and what to look out for while clearing asteroids, debris and little spermy alien things. Keep in mind, whatever objectives may be presented, they basically consist of avoiding something and then blowing that same something to kingdom come. Also look for a Two-player Mode where players compete for points, and a variety of bonus levels which have not yet been implemented.

I've got a bad feeling about this...er, wait. This is Asteroids not The Empire Strikes Back, right? Ohhh, for crying out loud...now I'm confused.

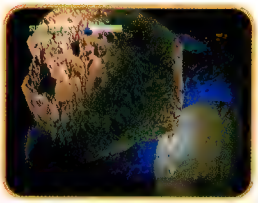
Behind the Screens

Asteroids in Asteroids

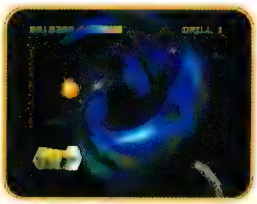
As you might have guessed, this enhanced 3D version of Asteroids has the original hidden somewhere in it. It'll probably open up after beating the game, or finding some secret. After playing the old one again, we found the enhancements in the new Asteroids to be quite fun.



Didn't we just see a bunch of movies on the big screen and a horrible made-for-TV version on TBS about this?



At this point, the proper thing to say would be "I need a clean pair of undies."



Some zones present dangers themselves like the Black Hole in this one above.

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SOUTH PARK™

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This game is for mature audiences.

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Nacmo Namco	1-4 Racing	60	1st Qtr. 1999

Web Address: www.namco.com

R4: Ridge Racer Type 4

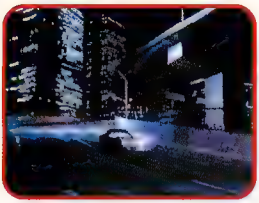
Something To Finally Kick Gran Turismo's Ass?

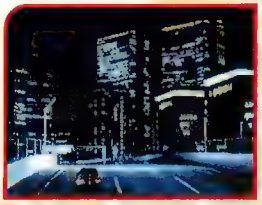
After reigning supreme as "king of racers" on the PlayStation for nearly three years, the Ridge Racer series was finally toppled earlier this year by Gran Turismo. It was bound to happen someday—but Namco isn't happy to sit back and see SCEE sit at the top of the heap for long. This December will see the Japanese release of R4 and a redressing of the balance. Whereas GT leans very strongly toward the "simulation" end of things, the Ridge Racers have always been about high-speed action rather than technical accuracy. R4 will be no different, but will push the very limits of the PlayStation in terms of graphical presentation. Rumored to be Namco's last game for Sony's box (because the system can't be pushed any harder), you can see from the screenshots that they convey an almost disturbing level of realism.

R4 will see eight completely different courses and 300 different cars (none of which are licensed, although they look suspiciously realistic)—although much of this lies in configuration of certain models along with their paint jobs.

Aside from the presentation, the other big changes are the Multiplayer Modes (supporting both two-player split screen and four-player link-up/split-screen action) and the new Grand Prix Mode, described by Namco representatives as being "RPG- like" in its complexity. Take on the role of driver, team manager and coffee boy as you tackle the politics of running a team between races. We have yet to see this in action, but hopefully we'll be able to bring you more information when we get our hands on a copy of the game next month.

The new graphics engine allows for some incredibly realistic lighting effects.





Check out some of the backdrops. The lighting is extremely effective.

Two-player split-screen and four-player link-up play is supported this time. About time too!

Check out the buildings...you wouldn't believe this was a PlayStation game if you didn't know better.

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Atlus Arc Systems	1-2 Fighting	100	November 1998

Web Address: www.atlus.com

Guilty Gear

Dirty Fighting Fun With None Of The Guilt

When it comes to 2D fighters, the PlayStation has always had a bad reputation. Limited RAM and a processor that was not specifically designed for sprites have been named as suspects since the system was released. Luckily for fighting fans, Arc Systems was unfazed by all this and unleashed Guilty Gear.

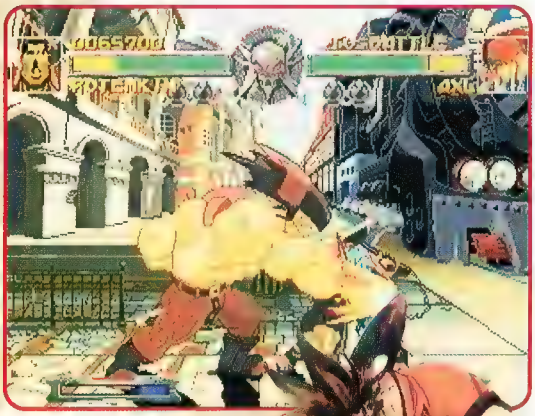
Choose from 10 characters ranging from a diminutive old man to a giant warrior who can easily give the Incredible Hulk a run for his money. In addition to the regular cast, there are hidden characters who will be selectable. All the characters fight with some sort of weapon except for the giant guy who just uses his rather large fists. Speaking of fists, you'll be able to feel the full impact of those crushing blows courtesy of dual-shock compatibility. Of course the big draw of Guilty Gear is the graphics and animation. The style is reminiscent of the Street Fighter Alpha series with vibrant colors in both the characters and the backgrounds.The look of the GG characters is still noticeably different due to the lack of pronounced black outlines which results in a rougher, almost blurry edge. There's nothing wrong with it, but it's definitely a style you'll either love or hate.

The special moves are very eye-catching and often result in bright lighting streaks or some form of pyrotechnics. Even some of the regular attacks produce great visuals like after-streaks and gushing blood. With all these things happening on screen, it's easy to get lost in the frenetic pace of the fights. It's also amazing that the characters can animate well since the effects usually suck up valuable memory. The fighting engine fully supports wild combos that enhance the colorful effects that result. Can this scrappy newcomer take the crown as the best 2D fighter on the PlayStation? Sushi and the crew will decide.

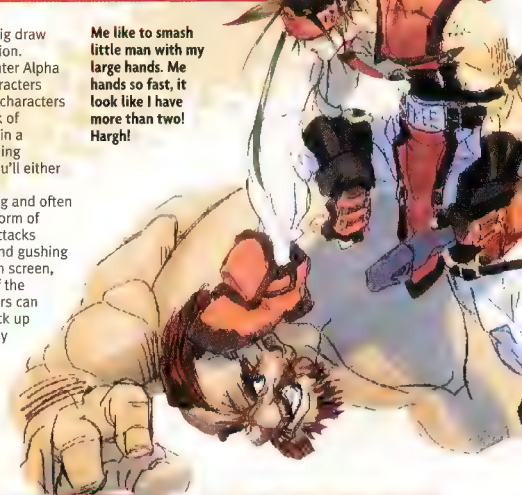
My 2 Cents

I've been tracking this game since it first reared its head at the Tokyo Game Show a year and a half ago. It showed promise then and it totally delivers now. I'm still dissecting the intricacies of the fighting engine (read it in my review), but I'm impressed so far. The biggest surprise though is the sheer amount of stuff that flashes on the screen. This is the sort of action that was missing from the neutered PlayStation Marvel fighting games from Capcom. The music is very good to boot. It'll be quite a showdown.

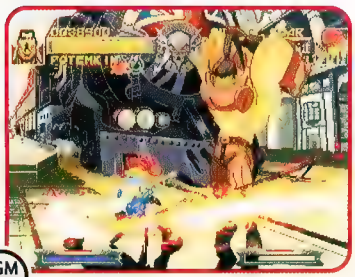
–Sushi X



Me like to smash little man with my large hands. Me hands so fast, it look like I have more than two! Hargh!



Flame on! It's common knowledge that swinging a metal blade really fast produces a blazing inferno.



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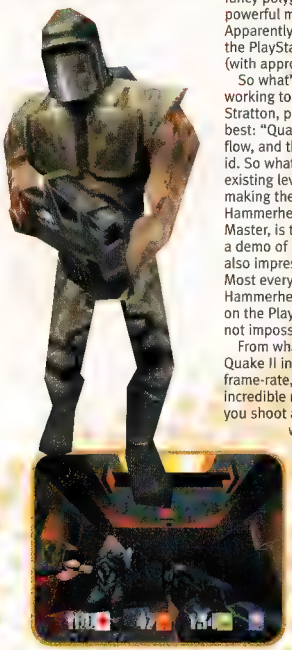
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Activision Hammerhead	1-4 First-Person Shooter	60	January 1999

Web Address: www.activision.com

Quake II

No One Thought It Could Be Done...



A long time ago Quake was supposed to come to the PlayStation but never appeared. Why? id Software (the creators of Quake on the PC) couldn't find a developer to make a playable demo that met their high standards. It's no surprise really, considering how intense Quake's graphics are with all of those fancy polygons and effects. Yeah, the PlayStation is a powerful machine but it's not *that* powerful—is it? Apparently it is, considering Quake II is on its way to the PlayStation from Activision and Hammerhead (with approval from id).

So what's the focus of all of these companies working together to make one product? Marty Stratton, producer for Quake II at Activision, puts it best: "Quake II [on the PC] has a great feel, a great flow, and that's really based on the design talents of id. So what we are doing with Quake II is taking the existing levels...and keeping a similar flow but making them very playable on the PlayStation." Hammerhead, most recently known for Shadow Master, is the only team that successfully created a demo of Quake II for the PlayStation—one that also impressed John Carmack, head dude over at id. Most everybody involved with the project prior to Hammerhead's submission thought any Quake game on the PlayStation would be extremely difficult—if not impossible.

From what we've seen so far, Hammerhead is doing Quake II incredible justice—with a speedy 30 fps frame-rate, 512x240 resolution, great-looking levels, incredible mobile-lighting effects (which means when you shoot a bright weapon down a dark hallway, the walls, floor and ceiling light up as the shot travels down the hallway), a good number of polygons and most importantly a two- to four-player split-screen Deathmatch Mode (yes!). In fact, the only thing lacking in the revision of the game Activision recently showed are enemies. They are in there mind you, and there will be more implemented as development progresses, but in this EARLY revision there weren't many bad guys around.

The finished version of Quake II will have 20-30 levels and around six deathmatch arenas. In addition, the game will have all of the enemies and 10 weapons from the PC version (or maybe new weapons if they decide to change them). What's different in the PlayStation version? Since the PS has memory limitations when compared to a PC, some levels may have to be smaller or split into two medium-sized areas in order to fit them into RAM. Also, there should be unique four-player deathmatch maps for the PS version, possibly a new monster or two (maybe a Boss or sub-Bosses) and Dual Shock support. Although it's not set in stone, the Dual Shock will allow for a "mouse look" control scheme where one analog knob controls where you're aiming while the other controls where you're moving (similar to GoldenEye and some PC first-person shooters).

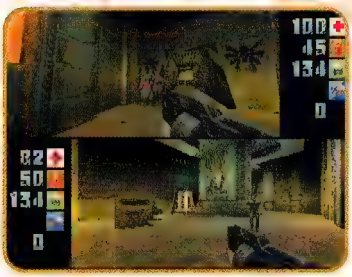
One interesting feature Hammerhead will add if it doesn't adversely affect gameplay or the frame-rate are bots. In case you're not familiar with what bots are, they essentially allow you to get into some multi-player action without your sweaty friends being around. Hammerhead is still not sure of how many players, bots and/or enemies can be on the screen at once without the frame-rate suffering though.

For more info on Quake II, take a look in the November issue of *The Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine*—with Lara Croft on the cover—for an in-depth feature on the game with a whole lot of info.

What's this—Quake II on the PlayStation? It's a reality thanks to Activision, Hammerhead and the gurus at id.

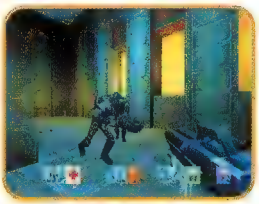
0

The percent-chance people thought Quake II had in actually coming to the PlayStation due to its intense graphics on the PC side of things.



Quake II on the PlayStation may feature capture the flag and every-man-for-himself Multiplayer Modes.

"Uh, look guys...I wouldn't call myself an intruder per say. Think of me more as a permissionally challenged visitor."



The spectacular lighting effects in Quake II will have you mesmerized as enemies empty clips into your gut.

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Eidos Crystal Dynamics	1 Action	75	December 1998

Web Address: www.crystald.com

Akuji the Heartless

Do You Do Voodoo? No, I Don't Do Voodoo. But I Do Do Judo

Akuji the Heartless, as you're no doubt aware, is being developed by Crystal Dynamics—the very same chaps who brought us Gex in his varied guises. Gex=3D action game, Akuji=3D action game... Akuji=Gex with different graphics? Well, um, no (thank God)—but it does use the same graphics engine.

Fortunately the team at Crystal has completely overhauled the engine from Gex: Enter the Gecko so much so that you'd be pretty hard-pushed to tell. It's not quite the complete hot-rod job that the forthcoming Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver is, but it is noticeably improved. Akuji's levels are filled with atmospheric lighting, moody effects, dark and foreboding crevices, and spooky bits—certainly not the kind of ambience that damn wise-ass gecko ever managed to generate. Akuji's characters and environments are also far more solid-looking with some detailed textures creeping up throughout. Underneath it all, it's still a run-around, jum-on-things and (in this case) hack-them-into-tiny-little-pieces-before-stomping-on-them job, but it does have a style of its own.

What sets Akuji apart from the deluge of similarly styled games set to hit the shelves this November is the subject matter. Something that a lot of games due for release this winter will suffer from is simple overkill. There are so many character-based 3D games kicking around that it's reached the point where as soon as a game is released, it's forgotten about. To try to ensure that doesn't happen here, Crystal has eschewed the usual cute, fluffy bunny approach to 3D action titles and has gone for a somewhat more, shall we say, "aggressive" tone.

Take the story for example. Akuji is about to get married to a girl from another tribe—their union will ensure a lasting peace in the land of Mamora. For an unexplained reason, Akuji's brother doesn't like the sound of this so he sets about killing everyone at the wedding in the messiest way possible (the intro shows the aftermath of the massacre with blood and goo everywhere) before ripping Akuji's heart out in a voodoo ceremony (the "heartless"—geddit?) Nasty huh? Akuji is then banished to hell—which looks uncannily like a 32-Bit 3D action game—where he must hook up with the souls of his ancestors, and I dunno, chug some beer with them or something. Oh no, he's got to use their power to break the barriers between hell and Mamora.

The gameplay itself is pretty much what you'd expect: 3D environments, big spooky monsters, power-ups, simple "puzzles" (pull this lever, hit that switch) and lots of voodoo-inspired violence and magic. It may not score many points for originality, but at least it carries it off with a certain amount of style.

The Gex engine has been changed to accommodate the darker, more malevolent look to the game.

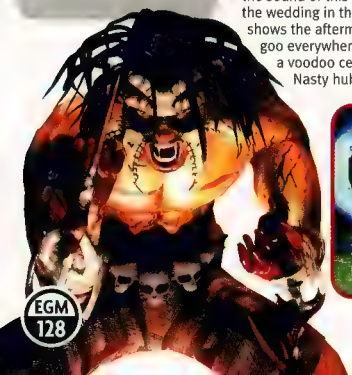
My 2 Cents

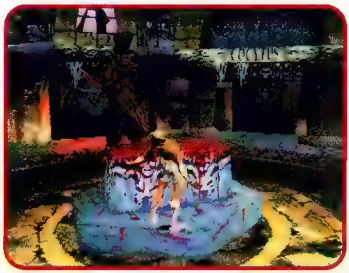
I don't know about you, but I'm getting a bit sick of these runny-jumpy-hitty 3D "action" games. I think that most developers have pretty much hit the ceiling on what is possible to do with the PlayStation as far as technology goes. From now on, it's the content and the ideas that are going to make even more of a difference. While Akuji is hardly innovative in terms of gameplay, at least it makes a bold step with its content and tackles some darker and more "adult" themes than your usual Crash/Gex/Tomb Raider wanna-be.

~John Davison

Factoid

Practitioners of voodoo believe that nothing in the world truly has a life of its own and that the universe is all one entity in which all things are connected. The term "voodoo" is derived from the French "vous deux," which translated means "you two," or, as often interpreted "you too."





A-a-a-a-a-choo! Akuji learns that sneezing with a nosebleed can get a bit messy.

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Nintendo
MIDWAY

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Take 2 Blam!	1 Adventure/RPG	75	January 1999

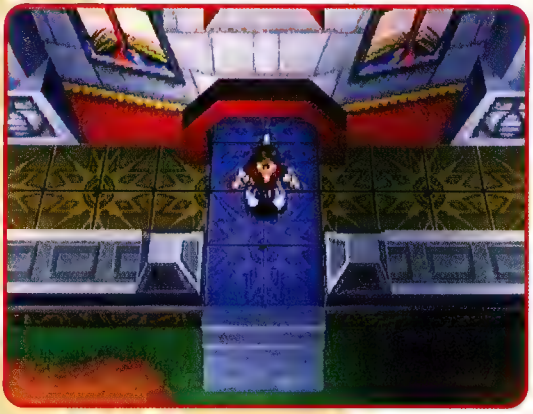
Web Address: www.take2games.com

Monkey Hero

No More Monkey Business!

Loosely based on the Chinese legend of the Monkey Hero, Take 2 Interactive's game of the same name places you in the role of the primate protagonist and thrusts you head-first into an overhead action game of mythical proportions.

Taking place over the course of three different worlds (the Dream World, the Waking World and the Nightmare World), you must take the Monkey Hero on a journey to the Nightmare World, where the creatures of the night are using children's dreams as a conduit to the Dream World. Born of the Five Elemental Spirits, the Monkey Hero was raised on the Waking World by a wise old Sage who tutored him as his student. Armed with the knowledge of Magic and Battle, the hero went off to defeat the invaders of the Dream World.



This is the Monkey Hero. Why is he called that? Well, he's a monkey, and, apparently, a hero too.

Playing in a manner similar to the original Zelda, Monkey Hero can be vaguely described as an action-RPG. While the RPG elements are stripped to the barest essentials, the action and exploration aspects can't be discounted. This game is all about roaming the huge dungeons, caves and forests. During his travels, the Monkey Hero must find keys to open treasure chests, keys to open doors that lead to rooms that hold chests that hold keys to other doors, and so on and so forth. Occasionally you'll throw a switch that will lead you to other keys, but you get the idea. What might not be so obvious is the plethora of hidden items in the game that must be uncovered through clever ways. For example, at some points in the game it is too dark to see and Monkey must locate and capture some fireflies in order to navigate the darkness. Another situation is where he must light a candle that he can use to burn a bush that hides a cave. Other, more complicated puzzle elements such as stacking blocks to get to out-of-reach places are found in the dungeons as well.

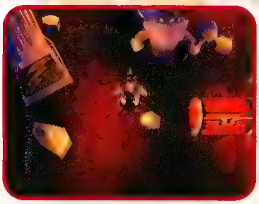
Scattered throughout the various places you'll explore are numerous enemies. Defeating these creatures can be accomplished in many ways, like pushing a bookshelf over onto an enemy, or simply whacking it with your bamboo stick a few times.

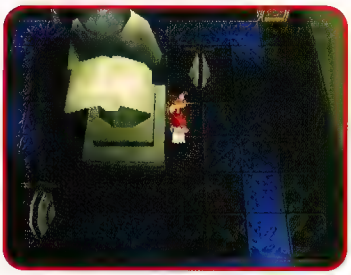
The graphics are a sharp blend of 2D sprites for characters and fully polygonal 3D backgrounds. Although the game seems a bit dark, the levels are unique, look good and are light-sourced too, giving the game an almost Klonoa-level of quality. The game's speed needs work at this point, and the implementation of analog control would help Monkey Hero's overall feel. The D-pad is OK, but they really need to give this guy the quicker-picker-upper—DualShock compatibility. If developer Blam! can iron out the few issues present, they might have a sleeper hit on their hands. The character is great and the premise, while a bit worn, provides enough of a vehicle that even skeptics won't mind. Look for Monkey Hero sometime in January.

My 2 Cents

This game has a lot of character (no pun intended), and could appeal to a wide range of gamers. The thing that this game really needs is analog control. The regular D-pad just feels too sluggish. Speeding up the gameplay wouldn't hurt either, but analog compatibility is really the key here.

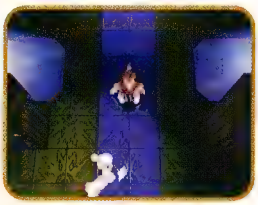
–James Mielke





There are a number of simple puzzles to solve in Monkey Hero. Usually they involve pulling a switch.

This is what happens when you drink too much Kool-Aid. Strange floaty-balls start hovering around your face.



This librarian will freely give you advice as to what you need to do next. That, after all, is what librarians are for.

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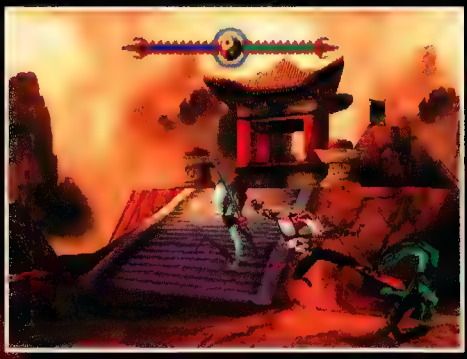

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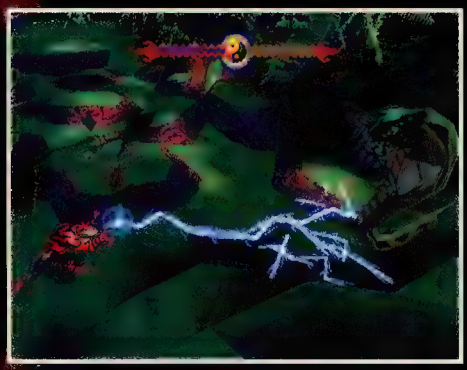

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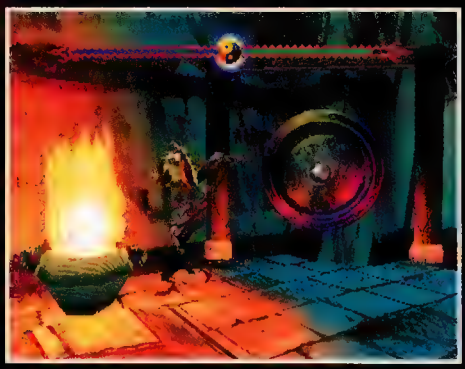

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Midway Radical/Candlelight	1 Action	45	1st Qtr. 1999

Web Address: www.midway.com

Jackie Chan's Stuntmaster

The Charlie Chan Of Chop-Socky Hits Home

My 2 Cents

It's about time that Jackie Chan had his own videogame on a next-generation system, and what better platform than the PlayStation? After all, he's the epitome of the term "living legend," and conveniently enough, an action hero. Although it's a little cartoonier than one would expect, it nevertheless captures the spirit of a Jackie Chan movie, and looks like it will appeal to many of the man's fans.

–James Mielke

Chop! Ka-pow!! Krrakk!!! Hi-yaaaa!!!! Those are the sounds usually associated with a man by the name of Jackie Chan. Yes, THAT Jackie Chan, the Drunken Monkey, the Charlie Chan of chop, the sultan of slam. The martial-arts madman who does all his own stunts has been the obvious choice for a video-game for some time now and thanks to Radical Entertainment, your favorite wise-cracking kung-fu fighter will be heading home to your PlayStation just in time for the holiday season.

It seems as if someone has stolen the reels to your latest blockbuster, appropriately titled "Stuntmaster," and it's up to Jackie himself to retrieve them from the thugs and hoodlums who would try to stop him. However, it's not just as easy as that. Apparently, during the ensuing chase, a substantial number of the reels have gone missing throughout the city, and these must be found as well, or else Jackie's fans won't be able to check out his latest kung-fu-fest. We wouldn't want that now, would we?

Set in fully explorable 3D environments, such as Hong Kong-style cities and moving subway trains, Jackie has plenty of places where he must search for his missing film. Strangely enough, the reels can be found on top of crates, catwalks, store canopies and just about any place you can think of. Also hidden (or not) in every dark nook and cranny are the endless supply of goons and troublemakers who'd like to grant Jackie an early retirement. Fortunately for you, Jackie's no slouch in the fisticuffs department and can utilize a large number of attacks while disposing of these scumbags. As you'd expect, Jackie has high attacks plus low/medium attacks which are executed using only the Circle and Square buttons. The X button controls the jumping and the Triangle lets him pick up items. Fighting is reminiscent of an old-school side-scroller like Final Fight, although everything moves in 3D. Other levels, like the subway challenge, test your reflexes in other ways, as you attempt to keep from getting creamed by oncoming obstacles as you ride on TOP of the subway train. Hopefully the rest of the game features a similar level of variety.

This guy's just mad because Jackie laid out his pal. Nothing to fear, however. Jackie wins in the end.

Graphically, the game is comprised of large 3D levels, where the intelligent camera system pans to an angle that's appropriate for the situation. Areas like the first "Chinatown" level look very authentic and lend a credibility to this lighthearted game. The characters, on the other hand, have a kind of Play-Doh appearance (including Jackie, so don't expect a "Lei from Tekken 3" level of detail here), but presumably this was to keep things moving smoothly and quickly, and it does. Nice lighting effects and easy pick-up-and-play action round out the package. Due in stores sometime this winter, fans of the man might want to seriously investigate this promising title. This is, after all, Jackie Chan.

Jackie will have to look in the darndest places for his film reels.

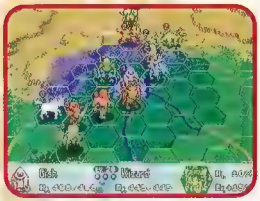
"Why, don't mind if I do!" says Jackie, as he takes a swig of "root beer" before going all "drunken-monkey" on this ninja.

Apparently, Jackie couldn't scrape up a token, so he jumped on top of the train! Duck, Jackie, duck!

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Atlus Hearty Robin	1 Strategy	80	November 1998

Web Address: www.atlus.com

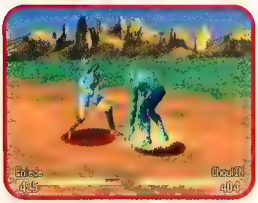
Brigandine



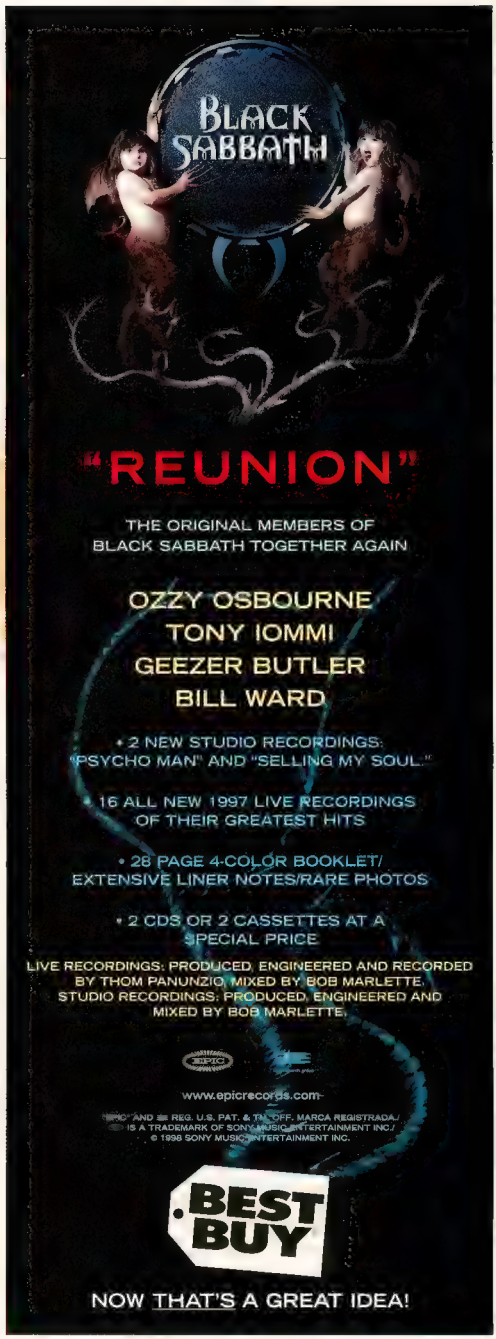
It's safe to say that there is no shortage of strategy games on the PlayStation. The latest contender to throw its hat into the ring is Brigandine from Atlus. Touted as a cross between Ogre Battle and Dragon Force, the game strives to incorporate the best elements of each of those titles. You can choose from five different characters who all have different motivations for uniting the land under their sole rule. Each have endings and available side quests that add both new story nuggets and exclusive special items. You can upgrade the class of your soldiers as well as the monsters under your command.

The battle scenes are played out by 3D polygonal characters and monsters. The results are smoother animations and lighting effects that reflect off the combatants. Also, unlike other games, the size of the characters and monsters are proportional to each other. A Dragon will be substantially larger than a Knight and a Golem will be about half the size of a Hydra. Not all the graphics in the game are quite as polished as the ones in battle. For instance, one aspect of the strategy game genre Brigandine has not been able to get away from are the sprite-based battlefield map graphics.

In the end, the story and overall challenge will determine if Brigandine will be a worthy entry into this crowded field.



This Golem is going to have a really bad headache in the morning thanks to these monstrous bolts of lightning.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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
989 Universal Interactive	1 Action	50	March 1999

Web Address: www.playstation.com

Xena: Warrior Princess

Look Out Lara, Here Comes Xena

While the debate on whether or not Tomb Raider's Lara Croft is a strong woman rages on, even in circles far beyond the videogame industry, it's clear that no one in his/her right mind would question the power of TV's Xena: Warrior Princess. And if a character's strength is any sort of measure of a game's worth, Xena's about to give ol' Lara a run for her money—because she'll soon be joining her in the 3D action-adventure playing field in Universal Interactive's Xena: Warrior Princess (with the working title appendage "Horrungus Among Us") for the Sony PlayStation.

The story behind the title puts Xena and her long-time "companion" Gabrielle in the way of a devious plot concocted by Xena's old nemeses Calisto and Ares, the god of war. The evil duo has raised a titan from infancy—the three-headed monster Horrungus—intending to control the incredible power it will have when it grows up, unleash it upon the world, and rule what's left—isn't that always the way? To test out the nearly full-grown beast, Calisto and Ares have captured Gabrielle and intend to either force Xena to help them or make the creature destroy both Xena and Gabrielle. Along the way, Xena wanders to places like Sisyphus' fortress, Pinnacles' temple, the home of the Amazon Birdwomen, and Hades Castle, and she faces such enemies as ogres, evil druids, dragons and Hades' minions, before confronting Horrungus itself. And then Calisto and Ares will, of course, still be waiting in the wings.

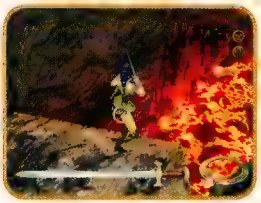
Xena fans can expect the game to show more than just characters and places from the series, because Lucy Lawless (Xena) and Rene O'Conner (Gabrielle) voice their characters' parts and had their faces texture-mapped for the roles—although the animation is done by hand instead of through motion capture. Theme music and sound effects are used as well. The gameplay is said to be like a more action-oriented version of Tomb Raider, with Xena acting out her adventures in a 3D world, followed by an intelligent camera that always puts her in the center of the screen. Her moves include punching, kicking, jump kicks, sword and staff fighting, and Chakram throwing (her metallic bladed "Frisbee"), as well as the special Hong Kong action-movie moves seen in the series, such as hanging in the air to kick an opponent in the face repeatedly. Look for 100+ animations in the final version. More than 20 levels are currently planned for the game, requiring you to visit some of the scenarios more than once. Secret levels and characters are also present, found through means unknown at this point.

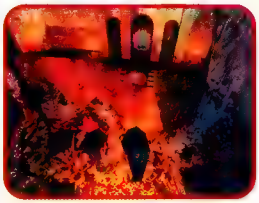
Gameplay will be similar to Activision's Tenchu, since some scenarios require more stealth-type movement rather than out-and-out fighting. For instance, in one level, Xena has to break into a fortress guarded by platoons of archers and swordsmen. If she marches in directly, she might find herself full of arrows. But if Xena sneaks up and ambushes the warriors one by one and then uses the Chakram to take out the archers at post in their towers, she should be able to get in unscathed.

Nothing can stand in the way of Xena: Warrior Princess when she's searching for her special friend Gabrielle. Now that's what we here at *EGM* call a strong woman.

Xena-tato

Proof that even Xena: Warrior Princess enjoys a vigorous and deadly game of Decapitato every now and again. "DECAPITATO!!!"





Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Natsume Taito	1-2 Puzzle	90	November 1998

Web Address: www.natsume.com

Bust-A-Move 4

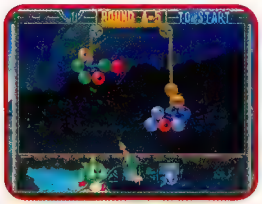
Can't get enough of that pudgy green dinosaur with a penchant for busting balls? If not, then your fix is in, because Natsume is bringing over the latest addition to Taito's bubble-popping franchise: Bust-A-Move 4. Gameplay, as always, consists of your player attempting to pop like-colored bubbles that endlessly descend from the ceiling. If the bubbles manage to reach the bottom, it's game over.

While you might wonder what Taito could possibly add to the already fine-tuned game-engine, there are a few extras that might tempt you into entering the world of Bust-A-Move once again. There's a new chain-reaction system that will let you pop more than one color at a time. There's also a new Pulley system that adds a new dimension to this game by balancing the bubbles on two ends of a scale. If one side touches the floor, your game ends.

Get ready for some good, old-fashioned trash-talkin' matches. Look at how this grey dragon taunts our poor hero.

There is also the Edit Mode which allows you to construct your own levels. Along with Edit Mode are the standard Puzzle Modes, Vs. Computer Mode, Two-player Mode and Challenge Mode. Also, a Grade Recognition system reviews your performance and gives you one of 20 different rankings, based on your success or lack thereof.

With 10 different characters plus numerous hidden ones, Bust-A-Move 4 gives you plenty of choices to play as. Unfortunately, there aren't any strengths or weaknesses to any of the characters, so they're really there for cosmetic purposes only. The addition of Dual-Shock vibrations adds a level of tension that is surprisingly effective.



While no radical changes have been made to the time-proven formula, BAM fans will more than likely find plenty to like about this latest installment.

BAM 4 adds force-feedback via the Dual-Shock pad. Believe it or not, it's actually very effective.

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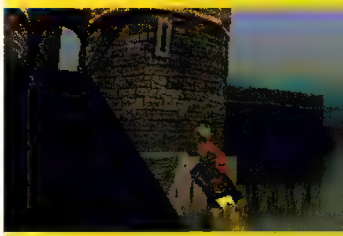

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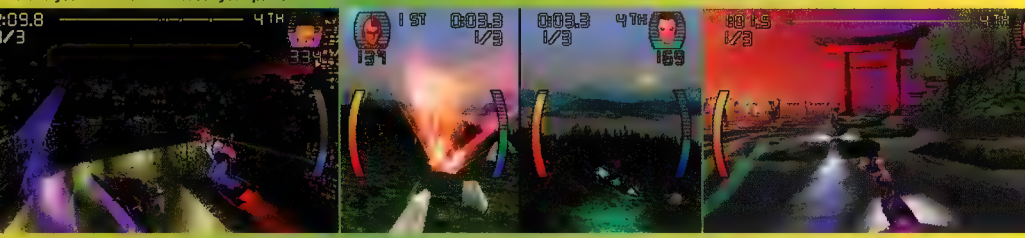


Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Electronic Arts EA Sports	1-8 Sports	60	November 1998

Web Address: www.easports.com

NBA Live 99

Anyone Up For A Game Of Around The World?

My 2 Cents

If EA can just get the game to play as good as it looks, there won't be any competition in hoops games this year. At question is the mo-cap animation which sacrifices mobility for realism. If they can manage to sort that out, make the game a little less sluggish, and speed up the response time, Live 99 may well be an unstoppable force this year.

–James Mielke

It's not easy developing a basketball game. First of all, there's two types of sports-game fans to appease when you make a sports game: the sim-freak, and the arcade-nut. The sim-freak wants the detailed stat-tracking and meticulous attention to detail, while the arcade-nut wants no-holds-barred action and thrills. It's usually impossible to do both things right and come up with a game that will satisfy everybody. More often than not, titles like this wind up being good at nothing in particular and less satisfying than if they merely concentrated on one style of game.

EA Sports hopes to change all that with the release of their newest basketball title, NBA Live 99. Now, anyone who knows EA, knows that they usually throw everything but the kitchen sink into their games, but have recently had difficulty making the transition successfully into 3D. However, with Madden 99, and now NBA Live 99, it seems as if they're ready to put all that behind them, as Live 99 features some of the most gorgeous basketball graphics on the PlayStation yet.

It's difficult to convey how realistic these players look and move unless you see the game, but it's quite impressive. The courts also look fantastic, with gorgeous reflections and polygonal bleachers raising the level of detail. Additionally, anyone with a Dual-Shock controller will appreciate the dead-on control and the feeling of every slam-dunk hitting home.

Among the new features in Live 99 are a GM Mode (which allows you to participate in a full draft), direct dunking, new player reactions, head-tracking, funky new music and an Arcade Mode. Another striking feature is the Instant Replay Mode, which is positioned to give you the most dynamic view of your most recent swoosh or slam. The interesting part is that the whole thing replays in black-and-white, except for the man who made the play, who is featured in full-color. It's a nice cinematic touch that adds a level of polish to the game. The soundtrack is also of note, as its funky tracks add an element of excitement to the already super-charged proceedings. As usual, new highlight films and FMVs of cheerleaders in action (yeah!) round out the typically glossy EA presentation.

The problem with many of the recent basketball games have been either sluggish gameplay or compromises in control, mostly due to canned animations resulting from the method of motion-capturing used to make these games so realistic. Whether or not NBA Live 99 sidesteps these pitfalls remains to be seen. While it certainly looks great, the jury's still out on the actual gameplay. We'll have a complete version soon enough though, and if the control and fun factor match the visuals, PlayStation owners jonesing for a kick-butt basketball game certainly have something to look forward to this winter.

Here we find Marcus Camby sailing above the Los Angeles defense. Shyeah, right! Where's Patrick when you need him?

Gamer's Edge

Sinking the three

This is probably the most common knowledge in videogame basketball, but it's worth mentioning again. The best place to release the ball is at the top of your jump. If you manage to get it right, not only will you be sinking the rock like a guy named Jordan, but the threes will be forthcoming and plentiful. This will serve you better in the long run, as it gives you more versatility, rather than always trying to slam the ball. All the better to bury your opponent with, right? Get in a rhythm and watch as the opposing team runs over itself trying to get at you.

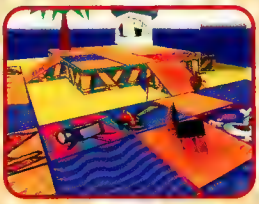
Karl Malone is about to teach Tim Hardaway a thing or two about trying to box him out.

You've got to release the ball at precisely the right time if you want to sink that trey.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
TBA Code Monkeys	1-2 Action	80	November 1998

Web Address: www.sci.co.uk

Live Wire



If nothing else, this title from little-known developer Code Monkeys and U.K. publisher Sales Curve Interactive (the guys behind Carmageddon and its sequel brought to the United States through Interplay) is going to bring back some memories of a seriously old-school game. Remember Amidar? Running around the lines of a grid to make boxes which are then painted in, while avoiding bad guys... all in the name of good, old-fashioned videogame fun. It's as simple as that. No convoluted story line. No BS. Although I seem to remember Amidar involving paint brushes and monkeys...none of that here.

Imagine that concept brought up to date with a smooth 3D engine and lots of bright, colorful graphics and seriously funky music and you have the formula behind Live Wire. Sure, it couldn't be described as original by any stretch of the imagination, but no one's gone back to this particular style of retro gaming just yet. So, whaddya reckon? There's a pretty good chance Code Monkeys are on to a winner here.

There are 50 extremely garish-looking levels to go through, and these are carved up into five different themed areas to keep things exciting. As you'll see from the screenshots, these vary from distinctly Halloween-looking environments to some brightly colored desert island-looking bits. Throw in some cool power-ups such as machine guns and missiles with which to carve up the bad guys and things look like they might be getting pretty cool. Consider that it's a one- or two-player game too, and it could turn out to be a surprise hit. Let's hope a U.S. publisher has the foresight to pick it up and bring it out over here. Interplay? Interested?

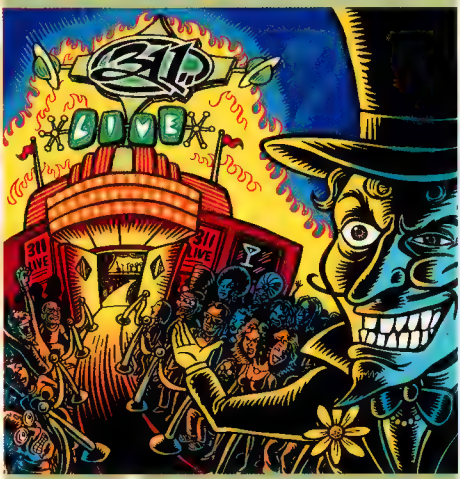
30

The number of pick-ups that are scattered around the grid. These include machine guns, bombs and missiles. All good, clean fun.

Paint all four sides of a box and it fills in as your color. You've now claimed it as your own.

311 LIVE

Featuring high energy performances of "Down", "Hamilbraw", "Beautiful Disaster" and more.



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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
3DO Cyclone	1-2 Action/Strategy	85	December 1998

Web Address: www.3DO.com

Uprising X

Lock 'N' Load! We're Takin' This Hill Inch By Inch!

My 2 Cents

As far as first-person shooters go, Uprising X suffers from bland graphics and a clichéd story line. It's not like the world needs another mediocre shooter, and there's little here that separates this from being just another "OK" title. There's still time for improvements, but I'm not holding my breath.

–James Mielke

Send 'em home in a body-bag! That's 3DO's battle-cry to all the other first-person mission-based shooters out there, heralding Uprising X's debut on the Sony PlayStation. Essentially a first-person shooter like any other, Uprising X attempts to add a new level of depth to the genre by giving you a multitude of vehicles to use during combat. These vehicles include tanks, aerial attack vehicles (i.e., jets) and bomber squadrons.

Set in the future, Uprising, appropriately, sets you in some very futuristic-looking locales. Sparse, barren landscapes accompanied by areas of scorched earth are the usual sights you'll see, while the green skies give you a good idea of the recent troubles the planet has suffered.

Your role, as a Wraith commander, is to engage the Imperium forces in battle over the course of the war, which, conveniently, turns out to be about 20 levels or so. During battle, not only will you be required to maneuver your own Wraith battle tank through the skirmish, but you'll also be able (and required) to set up additional forces and support around your base of operations. Since each faction has its own strengths and weaknesses, a great deal of strategy is required to successfully complete each mission.

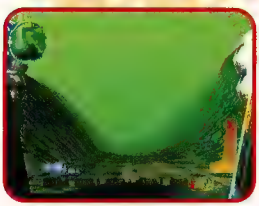
Similar in feel to 3DO's N64 title Battle Tanx, Uprising X offers a multitude of ways in which to play this game (albeit with a post-apocalyptic slant). Depending on what sort of ground forces you deploy and what sort of factories you build, the CPU will counter accordingly, creating a new experience each time you play.

Supposedly, the story line will be a substantial part of the gameplay, and the characters will draw you into the history of Uprising X. Whether or not this is actually the case remains to be seen.

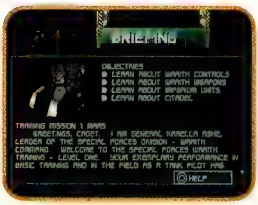
That's a dismal-looking sky and you had better get used to it. This isn't your sunny day kind of wargame.

However, if story lines and all that stuff bores you to death, then you might take interest in Uprising's two-player options. Siege Mode, for instance, pits you against a friend, while including all the base-building and other tactics found in the one-player version. Death Match, as you might imagine, removes the base-building and leaves you with a one-on-one free-for-all. If that isn't enough, there's also three more two-player games to play against a friend.

So, if first-person shooters are your bag, baby, you might like what 3DO has in store for you. It's a fast-paced game that attempts to deliver a grittier experience than is usually found in games such as these. If you happen to want a little strategy-action mixed in with your shooter, then you might REALLY be happy, because the options included in this game will certainly keep you busy for a good long while. In any case, should you choose to accept this mission, with the game due out this winter, you'll have your chance to stop the Uprising soon enough.

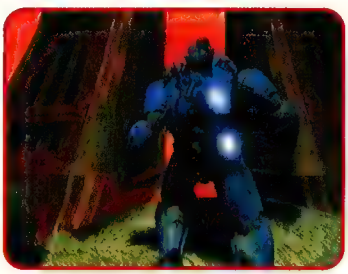


That's a really green sky. No way around it. It's green.


BRIEFING
OBJECTIVES
LEARN ABOUT WRAITH CONTROLS
LEARN ABOUT WRAITH WEAPONS
LEARN ABOUT IMPERIUM UNITS
LEARN ABOUT CYBORG
TRAINING MISSION 1 BRIEF
GREETINGS, CADET. I AM GENERAL KARELIA RAHE, LEADER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES DIVISION - WRAITH COMMAND. WELCOME TO THE SPECIAL FORCES WRAITH TRAINING - LEVEL ONE. YOUR EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE IN BASIC TRAINING AND IN THE FIELD AS A TANK PILOT HAS
HELP

This is the Debriefing Screen where you'll gather all the information you need.

Some heads-up display this is. Heck, you can't even see where you're going! Who came up with this? He's fired!



This blue dude, found in the opening sequence, is one of your guys. The enemy soldiers in the game are usually red. Red is baaaad.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Crave Craveyard	1 RPG	50	February 1999

Web Address: www.cravegames.com

Shadow Madness

Shadow Madness is the love-child of a group of developers known as Craveyard Studios. Formerly known as Big Rain, Craveyard is comprised of an assortment of industry veterans, including some ex-Square Soft programmers whose projects include the old Super Nes title, the Secret of Evermore.

Shadow Madness is a game that can best be described as a "Final Fantasy Light." Graphically, the game is composed of prerendered backgrounds (a la FFVII or Parasite Eve), with polygonal characters. As you might expect, you navigate your party around the backgrounds and search for clues and openings, occasionally getting into a battle (which can be avoided, by the way). Whereas many RPGs will have you in a melee every three footsteps, Crave has incorporated a system which you can use to avoid attacks. Whenever a creature is about to wrap you up in a melee, it gives off a sound. When you hear the sound you can duck to avoid the attack. The problem is, if you avoid too many fights, your levels won't go up. So balance is the key.

When battles do occur, the game switches to a fully polygonal engine. Using a simplified interface, Shadow Madness eschews the traditional menu-heavy approach for a "stripped-down" list of options. During battle you can use a Guarded, Normal or Aggressive attack, while other options, like retreating and an items list, are but a button press away. In terms of special spell effects, unlike Square's masterpieces, Shadow Madness takes a different approach to its stunning spell effects. Instead of waiting for an extremely long spell to run its course, Shadow Madness instead switches (lightning-quick) to a prerendered FMV to illustrate special attacks. Other, simpler effects, such as healing spells, are simply rendered on screen using the game engine.

Although a few details, such as the battle engine, need a little fine-tuning, Shadow Madness is a title with a certain charm, that could turn out to be something special by the time it ships this coming February.

After a little searching, your party will grow from one character to three characters. Later on in the game, you will find even more.

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LOCATIONS

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
989 Idedic	1 Action	80	February 1999

Web Address: www.playstation.com

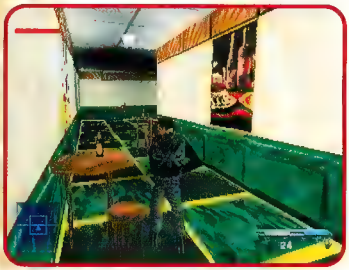
Syphon Filter

Solid Snake And Lara Croft's Illegitimate Love Child?

With stealth games and third-person action games all the rage right now (Metal Gear Solid, Duke Nukem: Time to Kill, Tenchu, etc.), it's no surprise that a title should arrive that combines elements of both. Syphon Filter, for lack of a better comparison, takes elements of both Tomb Raider and Mission: Impossible (or, possibly even Tenchu) and knits them together to form an action game that is two-thirds gun-blasting chaos and one-third stealth. However, it's not so much a stealth game in that you can't allow yourself to be found. Oh no, you'll be seen a great deal in Syphon Filter. Rather, you'll need to use your keen sense of awareness to take advantage of your surroundings and emerge alive in this tale of kill-or-be-killed.

The main character in Syphon Filter goes by the name of Gabe. Each level has objectives that you must complete in order to advance the story line. You're kept up to date by your contact at headquarters who will periodically send you new instructions on-the-fly. No sooner have you taken down one Boss character, when your superiors radio in another set of instructions. The game is fast-paced and will keep you on your toes as militant soldiers swarm in from all sectors, sometimes attempting to get to you, but more often than not, engaging in gunfire with your fellow agents. You must be careful not to get caught in a cross-fire, as friendly fire can damage you too. Furthermore, you must also be careful not to shoot one of your own men. Thankfully, your crew runs around in bright yellow suits, so identifying your allies shouldn't be a problem. Quite often, gunfire will be whizzing all over the place, right outside a window you might happen to be standing by. It gives you a feeling that things are happening whether you're present or not, making you feel like you're part of a really big mission and not some solo hotshot. Very cool.

Gabe has a large number of moves available to him. He can, of course, run in all directions, a simple process which is greatly aided by Dual-Shock compatibility. Using the analog pad makes things much easier on the thumb in this game. Gabe, being the limber cat that he is, can also duck, duck and roll, shoot his gun, duck and shoot his gun, strafe and climb objects. One of the best features in the game is the auto-lock.



Yes, I'd like a cheesburger, well-done, with a side-order of shotgun shells please. Hold the ketchup.

This reduces the stress caused by the sometimes awkward camera angles, because if there's a baddie in the area, Gabe will automatically lock on to him. You can even pick off guys firing at you from rooftops, which you can't even see. Another reason that this is such a welcome feature is because the graphics can be pretty rough at times, making it difficult to see the bad guy dressed in black at the end of a particularly grainy alley.

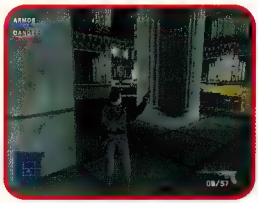
While there are a few issues that need to be sorted out before this game is finished, it seems as if developer Idedic is all over it, making Syphon Filter one to watch for this winter.

My 2 Cents

This game is actually very cool. While it still has some problems usually associated with third-person action games (i.e., awkward camera angles, funky graphics), it definitely has potential. With a little tightening up, Syphon Filter could be a winner. It already has enough strengths and innovations to warrant serious playtime.

–James Mielke

When you're tired of all the gunfire whizzing by your head, you can always retire for a spell, down in the subway.



Strategic use of environmental surroundings will save your skin when the bullets start raining.

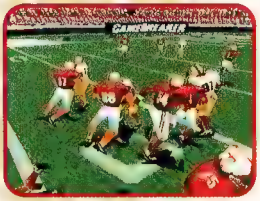
Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
989 Red Zone	1-8 Sports	75	November 1998

Web Address: www.playstation.com

NCAA GameBreaker 99

College football games are always a tricky proposition. Since the collegiate rules don't allow developers to put the actual names of the athletes in the game, it loses something in the way of personality. Therefore, a college football game has to bring a little something extra to the table, since they can't rely on fan-favorites to inject charisma to the title.

Well, from what we've seen so far, NCAA GameBreaker 99 might just set the standard for college football games for the foreseeable future. Developed by Red Zone Interactive, GameBreaker 99 is a considerable improvement over last year's already formidable version. Possessed by a completely new game-engine, GameBreaker 99 moves along at an extremely high frame-rate, with smooth player animation's and fast-paced action. The sound effects in the game do a great job of drawing you into the experience with awesome crowd noises, marching bands and bone-crunching sound effects. The players even trash-talk the opposition after making a particularly vicious hit. In addition to the incredible ambiance is the color commentary by Keith Jackson. The man says some of the most hilarious things you'd ever hear in a football game and does a great job of keeping up with the play-by-play.



112

One-hundred and twelve collegiate teams are included in NCAA GameBreaker 99, as well as an additional 50 All-time greatest teams to play as.

Control is excellent as either digital or analog work beautifully, with analog making it easier to squeeze your running back out of hairy situations. If you have a Dual-Shock controller, you'll be able to feel each bone-crunching hit as you receive it. The only problem with the Dual-Shock at this point is that you still have to use the digital-pad to select your plays. Sony's Icon-Passing system still works as efficiently as ever and makes finding your intended receiver a breeze.

However, if playing as your hometown university isn't enough for you, then maybe some of the extra features will sweeten the pot. Blue-chip recruiting, create-a-walk-on-player, schedule editing and other customizations are available for your perusal, while the custom playbook will probably be most gamers' favorite option. Create your own devious schemes to fool the opposition and watch your team execute your plays in any of the play modes, like Bowl Season, Scrimmage, Tournament and Fantasy League. There are also two control schemes available, simulation or total control, which will cater to different tastes.

Perhaps the biggest improvement to GameBreaker 99 is the improved AI routines of the CPU. It's now much more difficult to make long gains and low-percentage first-downs. If you want to beat the computer, you'd better mix up your plays or else you'll get sacked every time.

So, with 112 Division 1A teams for the picking, plus 50 All-time greats available from the start, GameBreaker 99 seems like it has everything you could ask for in a college football game. With the competition sure to be strong from the likes of Electronic Arts, 989 Studios knew they had to come up with something good. It looks like they might have done just exactly that.

The graphics engine in NCAA GameBreaker is impressive. The visuals and atmosphere feel just like a real collegiate pigskin matchup.

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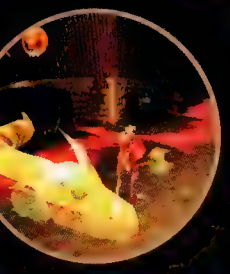
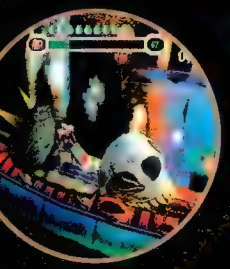
LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY WOKE UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE COFFIN.





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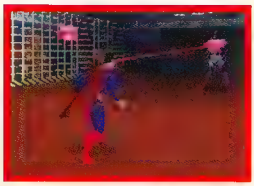

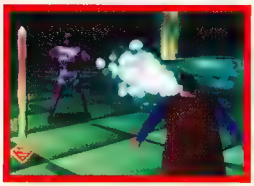

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Finding the remaining generators and the parties responsible is now top on The Man of Steel's "To Do" list.
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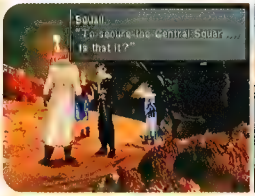
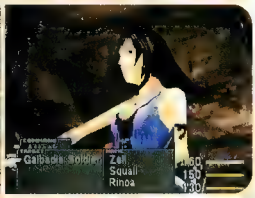
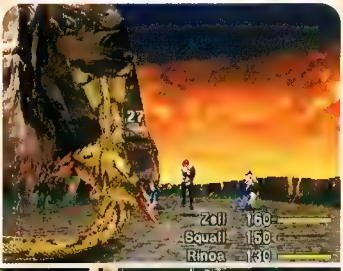
"... Truth, justice and the American Way are coming to a neighborhood near you."
CITIZEN ALERT
Daily Planet reporter Lois Lane and staff photographer Jimmy Olsen are missing and presumed kidnapped. An anonymous caller left a tip saying they were safe and being held in another part of the city.

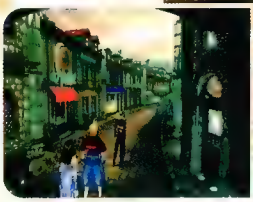
Final Fantasy VIII

From the latest demo disc being distributed with Brave Fencer Musashi (a good reason to check out that game) are these new screens. As you can see, things have come along beautifully, with all of the visuals proving to be even more exceptional than other recent Square projects. Showing some of the more urban environments in the game, the demo illustrates how effectively the prerendered backgrounds work alongside the polygon-based combat scenes.









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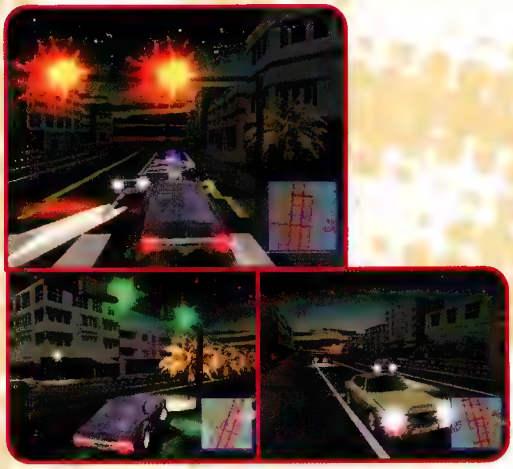
Silent Hill

Think of Resident Evil but a lot more twisted and frightening. Silent Hill from Konami messes with your head in the same way the movie *Jacob's Ladder* does. Your goal is to find your daughter who gets lost in an evil, hellish town, loaded with skinless freaks. Check *EGM* #109 for more info. It's scheduled for a March '99 release.

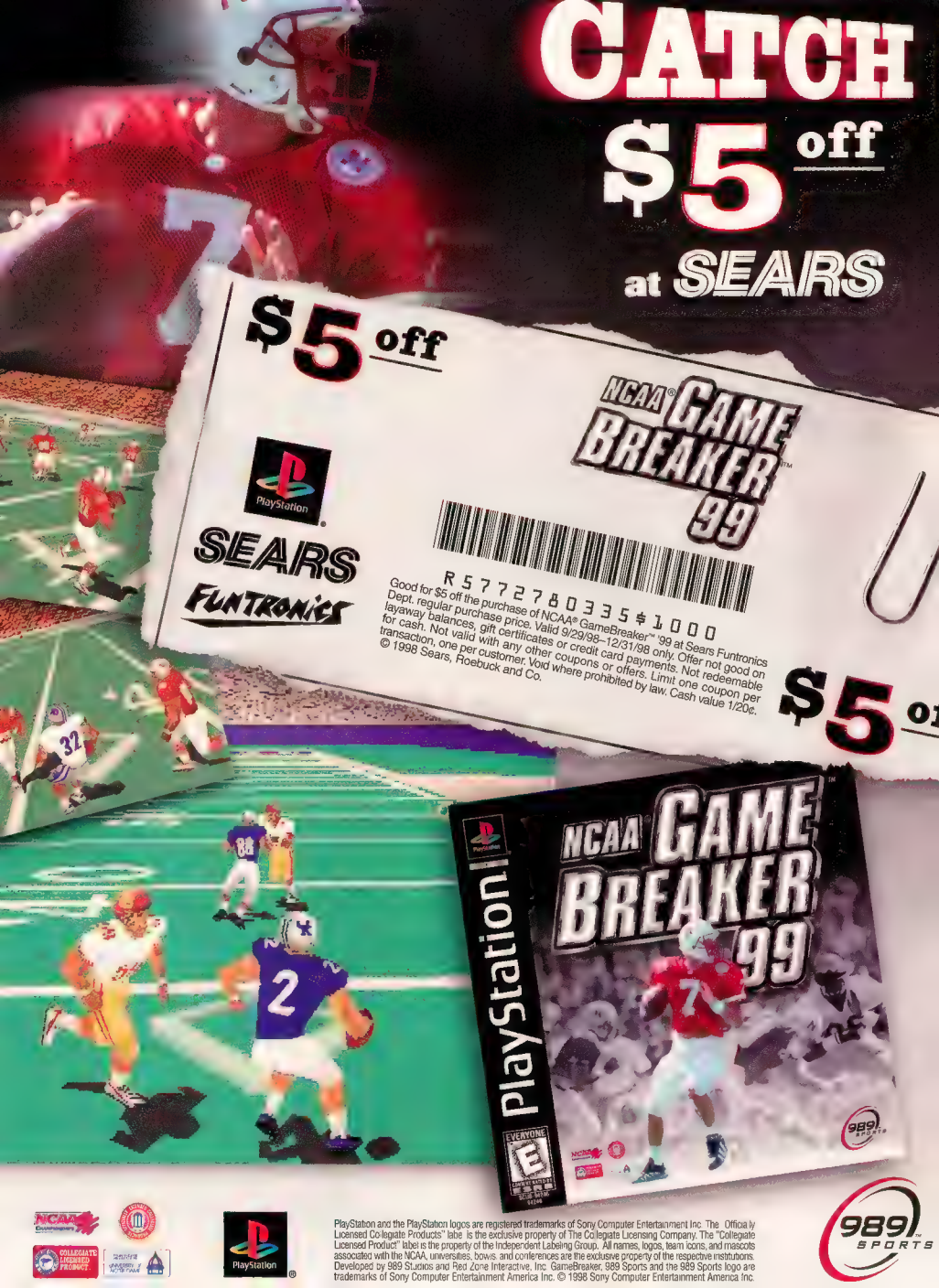
March Madness 99

It's not even March yet and we're all going mad. Actually we're only slightly disturbed in October. Anyway, EA's second edition of their breakthrough college basketball game will feature user-controlled dunks, three-point shoot-out, new animations, backboard-shattering slams and a TV-style presentation. This year's edition will have more "ladies" teams—16 in all. Wow.



Driver

New shots from Reflections' incredible-looking 1970s cop show-esque racer (see *EGM* #112 for a preview). Being the getaway guy for various criminals has never been so much fun. Think of Gran Turismo graphics and speed in city settings with a lot of jumps, crashes and high-speed chases. Reflections does not yet have a publisher for Driver.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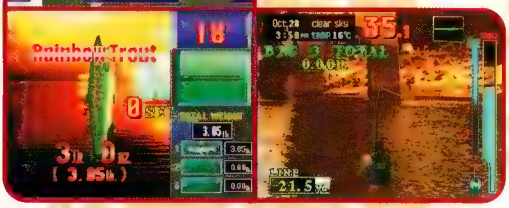
Fisherman's Bay

This game is actually a popular coin-op title in Japan. Konami believes we Americans might get a kick out of it as well. It's pretty straightforward, just choose a spot, be it under a bridge, by the docks, etc., select your bait, cast and fish. There's a time limit as well as several other "excitement" factors involved in the contest.

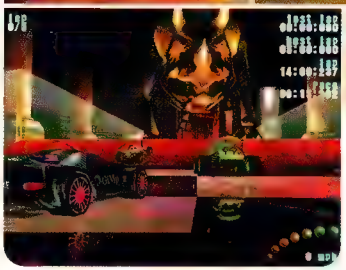


Test Drive: Off Road 2

Even though Accolade's Off Road 2 is about to be released, we thought you might want to see how it has shaped up. This reworked edition is really much more "race-able" than last year, thanks in part to the modified Test drive 4 game engine. A faster frame-rate along with 4-wheel independent physics makes for a better ride all around. The terrain has been tamed to facilitate the high speeds as well. You'll still see a lot of bumps and ruts but not as much as the original. The music is brought to you by Gravity Kills, Seven Dust and Fear Factory. Rock on, Off Roaders!

Revolt Racing

Revolt is an RC-style racing game currently in development from Acclaim. Now check out these stats, baby: twenty-eight cars to use and find within the game; a meaty 16 single-player tracks set in eight different environments; five single-player game modes including Time Trial and Battle Modes; a track editor and a wide selection of power-ups and weapons. Looks like it could be fun.



Kensai: Sacred Fist

Konami's martial-arts fighting sim is almost ready for release. The game will feature more than 20 ass-kickin' characters moving at a speedy 60 frames per second. As for the fighting gameplay, the traditional punch, kick and throw maneuvers will be joined with a special option which will allow special redirection moves. The new moves will let you block an attack and then suddenly counter-attack. It should add quite a quick-momentum-change element to the contest. Hopefully, Kensai will play better than Konami's dreadful Deadly Arts for the N64.

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Dungeon Keeper 2

Although the original PC game wasn't brought to the PlayStation because it was thought the machine couldn't deal with the AI requirements, it would seem things are different with the sequel. Bigger, badder and even more evil than the original, this novel twist on the strategy genre sees you as an evil sorcerer defending a dungeon from marauding heroes. Build traps, train monsters and keep your workforce happy.

All-Star Tennis

Ubi Soft has become the unofficial leader of the PlayStation tennis sim market. All-Star brings out the best in the world to battle it out on several unique courts located around the world. Judging from these screen grabs, Ubi Soft has brought the graphics up a few notches from last year's game. Gone are the "wacky" players. It's all by the book now with real tennis pros and their serious attitudes.

Michael Owen's World League Soccer 99

OK, we Yanks may not be as versed in soccer as the Brits, but we appreciate a good soccer, ahem, "football" sim as much as anyone. Michael Owens is quite a big shot (he plays for the England team) and consequently endorses World League 99 with glee. We'll have more on this Silicon Dreams title soon.

Japan (working title)

We don't know much about Japan (working title) yet, but Konami tells us this game will combine elements from Bushido Blade and Tenchu.

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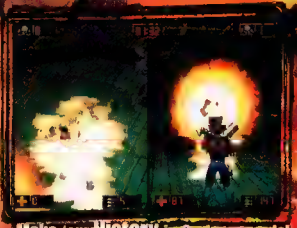

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Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. **Import at your own risk.**

Shining Force III
Scenario 3

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Sega Enterprises, Ltd. Sonic/Camelot	1 Strategy/RPG	100	Now Japan

Web Address: www.sega.co.jp

The Final Installment In The SF Trilogy

If you're one of the brave, the few, the proud, or rather, one of the last remaining Saturn fans, chances are you snatched up Shining Force III the instant it hit store shelves. If you did, chances are also good that you're secretly holding out hope that SOA will come to its senses, finish what it started, and release Scenarios 2 and 3. For the rest of you who harbor no such delusions, a trip to your local import shop would probably be in order, now that Sega of Japan has released Shining Force III Scenario 3, the final part of the trilogy.

As with SF III Scenarios 1 and 2, part 3 takes place concurrently, while focusing on the third main character: Justin. One of the main differences here is that the characters start out around Level 5, instead of Level 1, giving you access to more powerful spells and attacks from the beginning. Also, in keeping with SF III's innovative save feature, the events and characters in Scenario 3 depend on which characters you found, or saved, in the first two games.

While the game's graphics engine remains basically unchanged, there are a few subtle differences that make Scenario 3 the best-looking Shining Force yet. For starters, the game features a larger variety of texture-maps than the first two episodes, giving the towns and environments a more realistic feel. Basically, the buildings don't all look the same as they did in the first game. Other little details, like curtains blowing in the breeze, or smoke-stacks churning away on top of houses, also give added life to the already-improved backgrounds. The game's characters still have that Playmobil-appearance that Camelot's famous for, and the battle-scenes still load lightning-fast. As always, the sound effects pack a punch, and the voices are extremely well-done, although it must be noted that the soundtrack remains unchanged over the course of all three games.

Although the details of the story line will be lost to anyone who can't read Japanese, the game's interface remains identical to the previous chapters, making this an especially easy import to adjust to. In an encouraging twist, a saved-game from Shining Force III Scenario 1 (U.S. version) will work with the import versions of Scenarios 2 and 3. So, if you have a burning desire to see how the whole story line works itself out, you can either airdrop Sega of America with leaflets demanding Scenarios 2 and 3, or you can seek out this highly recommended chapter in Shining Force history through your favorite import shop. Chances are that will be the only way you'll see it.

In Scenario 3, you take the role of Justin, the third main character who made cameo appearances in parts 1 and 2.

At long last, you can finally discover what happens to Synbios, Prince Medion and Justin, the three main characters in SFIII.

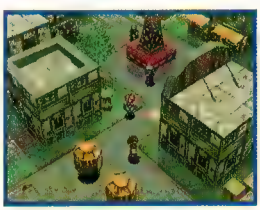
Behind the Screens

The Lords of Camelot

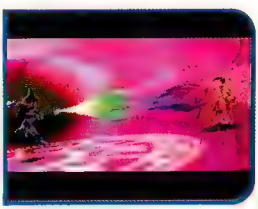
Although the name Camelot might not sound so familiar, their body of work most certainly is. The development team formerly-known-as-Sonic Software Planning has been responsible for games such as Shining The Holy Ark, the Shining Force III series, and even Hot Shots Golf for the Sony PlayStation. With the success of Hot Shots Golf, it's apparent that Camelot is able to handle game development outside the realm of RPGs. That said, it will be interesting to see what projects they come up with next.

12

There are at least 12 different characters you can use in Scenario 3, ranging from dragon-men to unicorns.



Camelot put a lot of work into making the towns and landscapes look better in Scenario III.



Battle-scenes are better-looking than ever before, with more realistic lighting and wilder spell effects.

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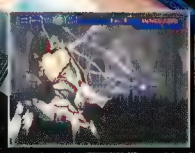

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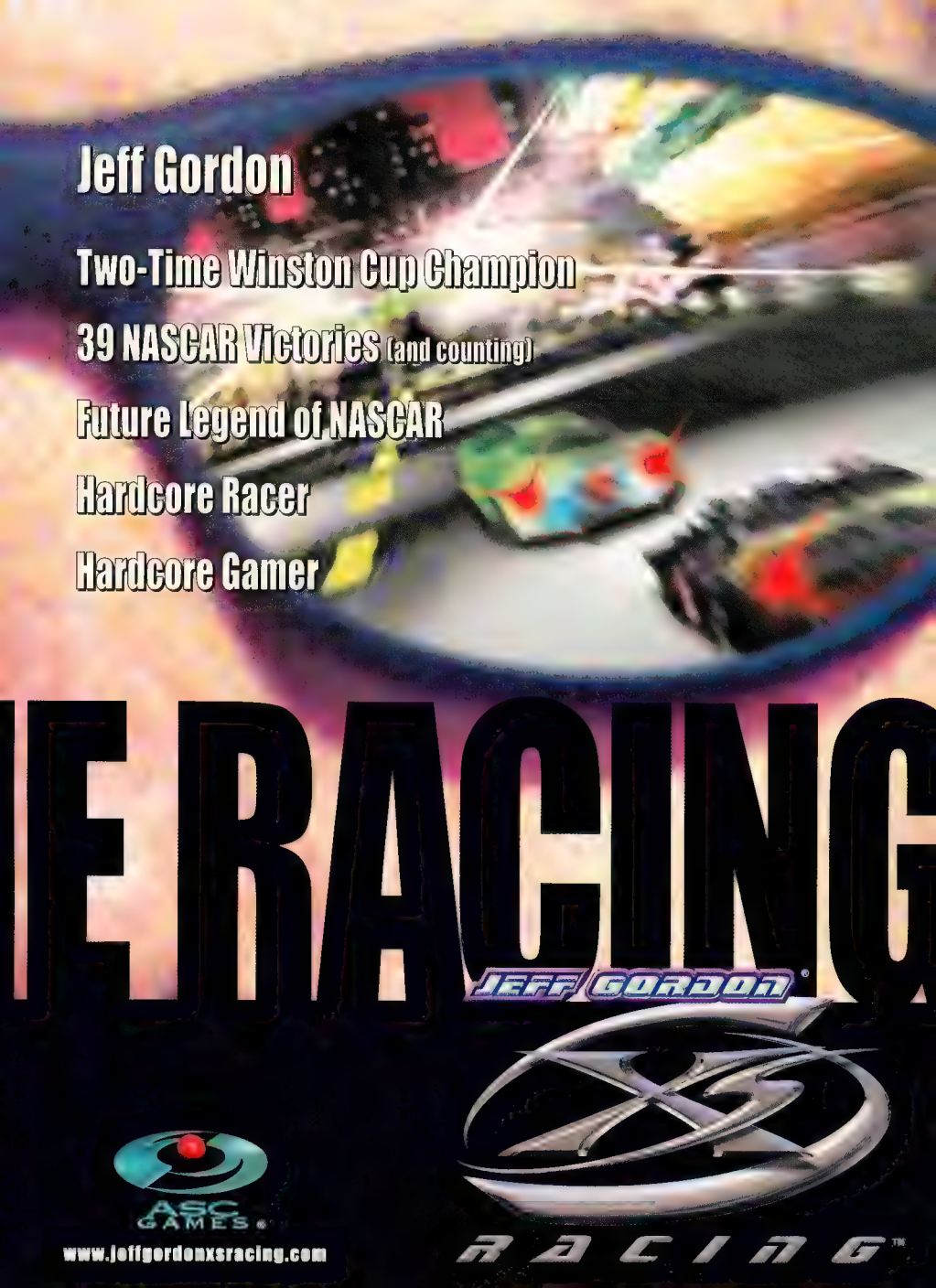
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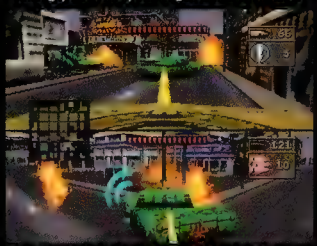

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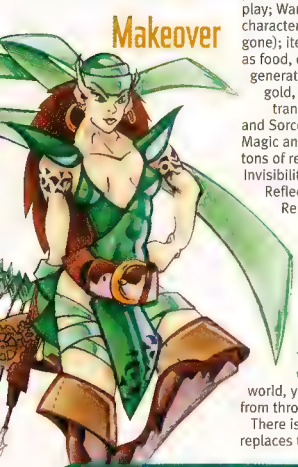
Gauntlet Legends

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Atari Atari	1-4 Action	97	4th Qtr. 1998

Web Address: www.atari.com

The Arcade Legend Gets One Hell Of A Makeover



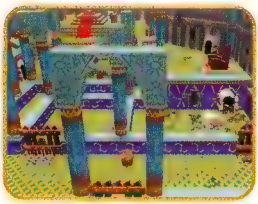
Since the last time we previewed Gauntlet, the game has really been fleshed out. As we said before, the gameplay is pretty much the same as the original games. You are one of four characters in a top-down perspective world, killing hordes of goblins, ghosts and ghouls. Several Legends features are taken from the previous games: four-player play; Warrior, Valkyrie, Wizard character classes (the Elf is gone); items and enemies such as food, chests, traps, monster generators, magic, teleports, gold, Death, "It," and transporters (the Thief and Sorcerer are no more); Magic and Fight buttons; and tons of returning power-ups: Invisibility, Invulnerability, Reflective Shots, Super Shots (gone: Repulsiveness and Transportability).

Gauntlet Legends is almost an entirely different game however, when you add all the new innovations including a fully 3D playfield with stairs, moving elevators, surrounding ledges, intricate hidden areas, secret rooms and multiple levels of play. There are four full worlds of play, with a fifth secret "Boss" world at the end. To defeat the Boss at the end of the fourth world and then gain entrance into the fifth world, you must have collected all 13 runestones from throughout the game.

There is a new Archer class. This female character replaces the original "male" elf. Another new addition to the game is character depth. You are able to save your game via name and password. Throughout time, your character will gain levels of experience, and this will raise ratings for strength, armor, magic and speed. Each character class has four distinct color-coded versions—one for each kingdom. In addition, after reaching a certain experience level, you will be given the opportunity to transform your character into a creature such as a minotaur or a female tiger. You will have the same abilities but have new animations and a new look. Each character also has at least three classes of specials that inflict heavier damage. The specials are activated with the Fight and Turbo buttons.

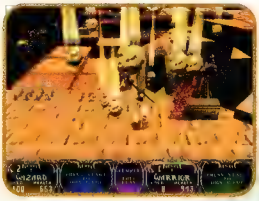
The new Turbo button is for use in melee fighting

The environments in Gauntlet Legends are so incredibly huge, it could take 45 minutes to explore each one!

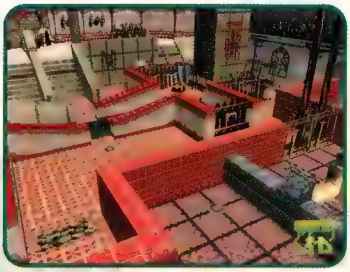


The layouts of each level are far more complex than those of previous games.

There are at least 16 new power-ups you can use in this version of Gauntlet.



Magic can be used the same as it was before, but now you can focus it better.



(special moves) and magic. Magic will be used for far more than clearing the screen of enemies or killing Death. Magic can be used as an area effect (as before), but can also be used with Turbo button to become a "shaped" Magic with a smaller radius but longer duration, so characters can walk with it like a shield.

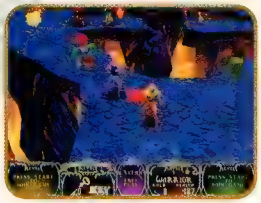
Of course, there are tougher monsters in this new world. Each kingdom has been overrun by a host of unique minions—13 in all for each kingdom. This includes grunts, tougher characters, ground-dwelling meanies and assorted other unique denizens. Some monsters take one hit to kill, others take many. One new enemy is the "Suicide Bomber,"-crazed underlings who have kegs of dynamite strapped to their backs. When you see the other enemies running from this guy, you should too!

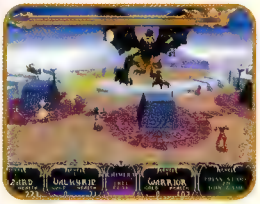
One big change from previous games is that you can't hit monster generators from off the screen. That's OK though, because you have at least 16 new power-ups to kill the many hordes of creatures. Among the new powers are 3-Way Shots, 5-Way Shots, Time-Stop, X-Ray Vision, Halo (anti-Death aura), Levitation, four color-coded elemental amulets (Fire, Ice, Poison Gas and Light), Enhanced (gold) Invulnerability, Enemy Shrinking, Player Growth and weapons (fire, ice and gas), Rapid shots, The Phoenix and The Hammer of Thor. Some of these you might be able to buy in the shop.

Gold in the original games were only for score. Now, Atari has also taken Gauntlet to the next level with the shop. Between levels, players can use their accumulated gold to buy health or increase their character's attributes.

One of the more obvious differences between previous Gauntlet games and Legends is the addition of Bosses. There is one main Boss in Gauntlet, the Demon, who seeks to spoil the land for his own foul means. He has under him four regional overlords, each a master of a kingdom. This includes the Dragon, boss of the Mountain Kingdom; the Chimera (pronounced Ki-mer-a), boss of the Castle; the Genie, Boss of the Desert Kingdom; and the Spider Queen, overlord of the Forest Kingdom. Each of them is an extremely difficult opponent to destroy. Only by destroying all four will the player gain access to the keys needed to unlock the citadel of the Demon to face the ultimate Boss.

The graphics for Gauntlet are handled by (of course) a 3D chipset named "Vegas" (no, not the cheesy '70s show with Robert Urich). The game looks incredible, and there is a ton of action happening at once on the screen. Legends also utilizes a hard drive like so many other games today. There is no slowdown, and the textures all look spectacular. This game will have a hard time selling to the mind-numbed fighting game robots who make up most of today's arcade audience, but it is one of the most innovative arcade games to date. It reminds this old writer of games like the original Gauntlet, Cadash and Magician Lord—excellent games whose type we may see more of since SF clones are slowly, slowly on their way out. All praise Atari!



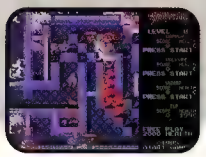


The Bosses are extremely tough. You will need plenty of experience to attack them.

Games to date

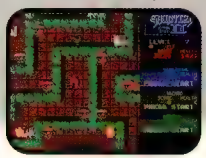
Gauntlet

When released in 1985, Gauntlet revolutionized the arcade-going experience. Designed by Ed Logg and Bob Flanigan, and produced by Atari Games, Gauntlet had 110 unique dungeons.



Gauntlet 2

Gauntlet 2 was released in 1986. Designed by the same team, the sequel included a new "it" feature (tag a friend and all monsters attack him) as well as new monsters and unlimited replay.



Gauntlet 4

In 1993, Tengen gave us a new version of the classic. Called 4 because four players could play for the first time on a home system (Genesis), it included new Quest and Battle Modes, as well as a Time Trial Mode.

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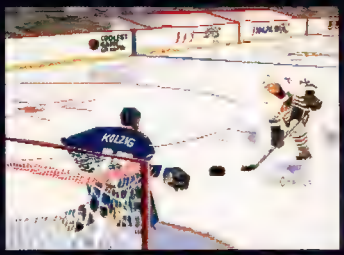

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Atari Atari	1-2 Light Gun	100	Available Now

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Site 4

Area 51 Was Only The Beginning...

Area 51 introduced players worldwide to the exploits of STAAR, the top-secret alien-busting special forces team, whose mission was to thwart the invasion plans of the fearsome alien parasite from the planet Kronn.

Now the STAAR team has learned that the Kronn alien species was not wiped out during the first battle at Area 51 as previously thought. Secretly, a rogue branch of the military has established a stronghold in the decrepit S-4 labs, deep beneath the sprawling sands of the mysterious base. Renegade scientists are performing cutting-edge genetic recombination experiments in hopes of creating a stronger, deadlier and more controllable alien. But if we have learned anything from previous experiments with Kronn DNA, it's that things can quickly get out of control, and they do.

Once again, the STAAR team is the world's only hope. This time, players will undergo intense physical and mental training before going to war against the resurgent Kronn. In each of 18 different training waves, players will hone their reflexes and sharpen their targeting skills in preparation for the coming invasion of the Site 4 labs. Once they are ready, players jump into battle with experience on their side. However, this time the Kronn are more than just cannon fodder. They have gotten smarter, stronger, and deadlier. And this time, they have a leader.

Site 4 is a light-gun game, employing the same technology as Atari's other recent gun games Area 51 and Maximum Force. The game consists of the training waves, divided into three "sites" (Sites 1, 2 and 3), and a roughly six-minute long, full-blown movie-style gameplay sequence similar to Area 51 (Site 4). To play Site 4, the final all-out battle against the Kronn, players must complete one of the first three training sites, and complete ("pass") the six events within the training site. Each event has a quota, a certain number of targets that must be hit in order for the event to be successfully passed. These events typically involve accurate and fast shooting of aliens, spaceships or other targets. In some events, players can pick up shotguns and machine guns that can help them perform better. Shotguns, for instance, have a wider blast radius and make it a lot easier to hit tough objects. The placement of the power-ups can sometimes be a distraction, though—a good player will master the timing of objects to pick up the power-ups when they will cause the least distraction.

Some of the same aliens return from Area 51—including the Stage 1 zombies and Stage 3 Kronn aliens. Now, each one takes multiple shots to bring down—they have gotten tougher! The zombies and aliens can now be hit in one of several places—either in the arms, heads or torsos. The latter will knock them down, and if it isn't the fatal blow, the aliens will jump to their feet again and continue their onslaught.

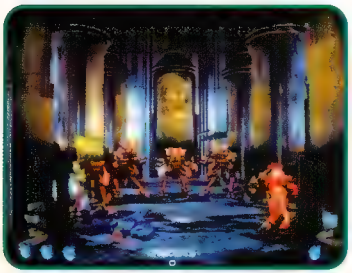
The aliens now have a Boss—the big bad Kronn Queen. She is a sight to behold—standing nearly 20 feet tall, she has a demonic look and appendages that hurl fireballs. In several lock-down stages in Site 4, the Queen shoots fireballs, chunks of concrete and

The bosses in Site 4 are more complex than in its predecessor. There are also more areas to explore, which means more bosses to frag.

My 2 Cents

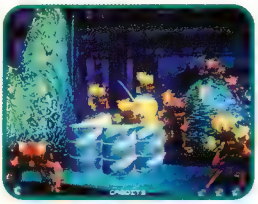
Site 4 looks really nice! If you were a fan of the original (and many of you were as it was #1 on most charts for almost a year), there is little doubt you'll love this one. Besides the simple point-and-shoot-the-zombified aliens game, there is a new Practice Mode as well! Site 4's hardware is far superior to that of Area 51, and you can really tell when you see the animation of the new enemies and Bosses. This game will rock!

–Mark Hain



There are the same hordes of aliens trying to kill you, as you can see in this breeding chamber.

Site 4 has a little more of a story line than Area 51—each mission briefs you.



There are just as many (if not more) background items to shoot at in Site 4.

DUE SOON

ALIEN
RESURRECTION
THE GAME

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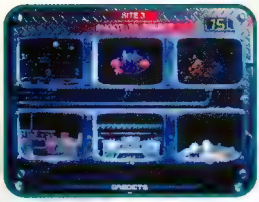

even her own minions at the player. For the most damage, players can aim for her sweet spot.

Like Area 51 and Maximum Force, Site 4 will be rich with shootable objects—objects in the environment that are worth points as you blow them up—things like crates, lights, windows, etc. Also, there will, of course, be plenty of secret rooms.

One thing that seems to be missing in Site 4 is the meter that tells you which of the two players is shooting the more targets. This was an excellent incentive to shoot as many enemies as you could, and brought in a level of competition previously not seen in a light-gun game. It is also unknown if the cool streak feature will be included in this game. Streak simply meant that you continually shoot enemies without missing. This would exponentially raise your score and, once again, added an air of competition to a two-player gun game. It is likely both of these will be added by the time the game is shipped.

As for the hardware, the new Cyrix Media GXi chip (running at 20Mhz), 16 MB RAM and 2.1 Gig Quantum IDE hard drive produce a richer and more vibrant look than either Area 51 or Maximum Force. The level of detail is amazing, and the new hardware allows us to have interactive aliens, which take multiple shots and can have selective hit reactions depending upon where on their bodies you hit them.

Area 51 was a very popular game. It might be that we in America seem to be in a bit of an "alien frenzy" right now, or it might be the fact that it was a simple gun game utilizing a hard drive, offering awesome rolling backgrounds and effects. The reason for its longevity is the plentiful secrets, and Site 4 appears to be no different. Add to that the fact that this game has even more ground to cover, more strange and different aliens and more intricate Bosses to destroy, and you have a game that will probably be #1 as long as Area 51 was.

Behind the Screens

Area 51 the movie in development

Scripts have been submitted and subsequently rejected because, well, they sucked. The movie does have a producer, the same who produced *Forrest Gump*– Steve Tisch. No cast members have been chosen yet. The story will most likely follow S.T.A.A.R., the Kronn aliens and creation of the strange hybrids. It is unknown if any story elements from Site 4 will be used, but it seems unlikely. In fact, knowing Hollywood, they liked the name Area 51, aliens are hot, and we'll see Leonardo DiCaprio and Ben Affleck blasting hordes of Cindy Crawford clones. Who knows?

There are events throughout the game that really test your skill and marksmanship.

Just as in Area 51, you will be able to destroy explosive items to take out a ton of aliens at once and shoot boxes for special weapons.

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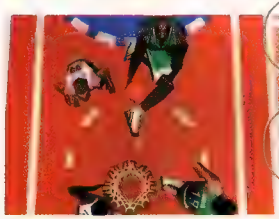

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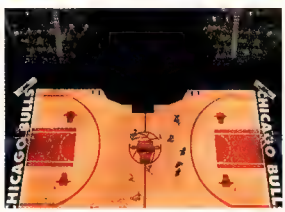

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Keith Van Horn
1997-98 Rookie Sensation

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Sega Sega	1 Action	40	N/A

Web Address: www.sega.com

Star Wars Trilogy

The Best-Looking Star Wars Game Yet

One of the biggest surprises of this year's AMOA had to be this little diddy from Sega. Of course, the graphics are on par if not surpassing anything Sega currently has on the market. The sound quality is excellent as well, with R2 bleeping whenever you're hit. Unfortunately the game itself seems to be little more than Sewer Shark or Rebel Assault. You move a cursor with your joystick, and hit various imperials whether they be in TIE Fighters, on speeder bikes or on foot.

Only two levels were available to play at the show: Endor and Yavin (Hoth was on the Select Screen but not playable). Trilogy mimics both the old vector effects game and the fairly recent Star Wars Arcade games in that you fight through far too many TIE Fighters, search out Darth Vader's TIE Fighter, and then make a final assault on the Death Star. Just as in the vector classic, you must also take out the tops of cannon towers as you approach them or you will be fired upon. As you enter the trench, you are shot at by fighters and cannons until you reach the exhaust port to fire your torpedoes.

On Endor, you start on a speeder bike. Enemies are on bikes themselves, and have hit point meters above their heads. After this, you walk on foot and try to save Ewoks from the evil stormtroopers. Your final objective in this level is the shield generator.

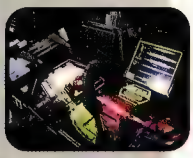
After you defeat the first three levels, there is a final battle, not yet seen by anyone. According to Sega, this will be a lightsaber battle against Darth Vader. You'll use your joystick just as you would the handle of a saber. This sounds like the most strategic part of the whole game.

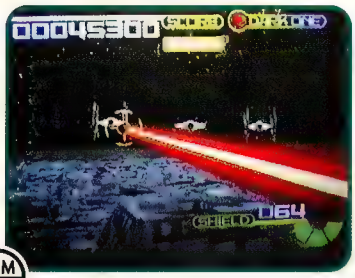
Star Wars Trilogy looks like it will be typical Sega fare. The graphics are unparalleled, utilizing everything the newest Model 3 board has to offer. In the Yavin level, the planet is below and many Star Destroyers are blasting alongside their fighters. On Endor, AT-ST walkers can be seen plowing down forests as you race by on your speeder bike. Animations for all of these are spectacular and once again Sega proves they can't be touched in the graphic detail versus gameplay. We'll have to wait to see if more depth is added, as this was a work-in-progress when played.

While trying to destroy as many TIE Fighters as possible, don't be distracted by the flying cities known as Star Destroyers breathing down your neck.

The Control

Simple enough, you have a joystick with a button on top and an "Action" button (not used yet except to start the game). It's a little awkward to aim with, but you get used to it.





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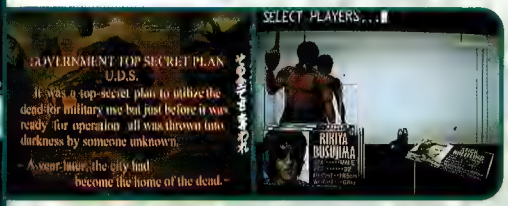
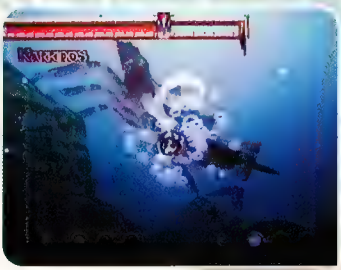
Blood Bullet: House of the Dead Side Story

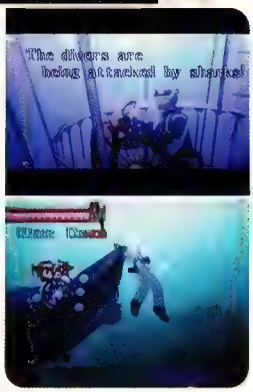
To help prepare you for Dreamcast's Bio Hazard, Sega's bringing out Blood Bullet (whose name will probably be changed to Zombie). This is a third-person perspective action game where you control one of three people trapped in a world of zombies. The gameplay is a lot like Spike-Out's, but this game will be on the Naomi, so expect some incredible graphics.


GOVERNMENT TOP SECRET PLAN
U.D.S.
It was a top-secret plan to utilize the dead for military use but just before it was ready for operation all was thrown into darkness by someone unknown.
– A year later, the city had become the home of the dead. –
SELECT PLAYERS...
RIKIYA
BUSHIMA



House of the Dead 2

If you played the first one, you get the gist of HotD 2. Zombies are rampant and it's up to you to stop them. This game is on the Naomi system and looks incredible. More info on this one later.



Ocean Hunter

Winning the award for the least environmentally friendly game in history: OCEAN HUNTER! You invade the water realm, the sea life attacks, and you kill them. Since you're underwater, your bullets can be diverted by water currents. The colors are a bit pastel, but the animation is incredible.

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F1 Racing Sequel	10/98	$46.99
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Intl Super Soccer 98	09/98	$44.99
Jeff Gordon Racing	03/98	$46.99
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Kartia	08/98	$44.99
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MediEvil	10/98	$42.99
Mega Man Legends	09/98	$39.99
Mega Man X4	10/97	$39.99
Men in Black	10/98	$44.99
Messiah	11/98	$42.99
Metal Gear Solid	10/98	$49.99
Mortal Kombat 4	06/98	$44.99
Moto Racer GP 2	09/98	$39.99
NASCAR 99	09/98	$42.99
NBA Fastbreak 99	11/98	$44.99
NBA In the Zone 99	02/99	$46.99
NBA Jam 99	12/98	$43.99
NBA Live 99	11/98	$42.99
NBA Shootout 99	11/98	$42.99
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NCAA Game Breaker 99	10/98	$47.99
NFL Blitz	09/98	$44.99
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Release: 12/98
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Nintendo (Simulation)
Release: 11/98
N64
$52.99

NINTENDO 64

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Banjo-Kazooie	07/98	$52.99
Blues Brothers 2000	12/98	$66.99
Body Harvest	10/98	$58.99
Bomberman Hero	09/98	$52.99
Buck Bumble	10/98	$62.99
Castlevania 64	02/99	$56.99
Chopper Attack	07/98	$49.99
Conker's Quest	01/99	$53.99
Cruis'n the World	10/98	$52.99
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Extreme G 2	10/98	$64.99
F1 World Grand Prix	07/98	$62.99
FIFA Soccer 99	12/98	$54.99
FOX Sprt Co l Hoops 99	11/98	$68.99
Fighting Force 64	10/98	$59.99
Flying Dragon	10/98	$54.99
GT Racing	09/98	$55.99
Golden Eye 007	09/97	$42.99
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Intl Super Soccer 98	09/98	$56.99
Jeff Gordon Rac ng	03/98	$66.99
Jeopardy	03/98	$54.99
Knife Edge	09/98	$49.99
Legend Mystical Ninja 64	06/98	$59.99
Legend River K ng	02/99	$54.99
Legend of Zelda	11/98	$64.99
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NBA Live 99	11/98	$54.99
NFL QB Club 99	10/98	$64.99
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Turok Dinosaur Hunter 2	10/98	$64.99
WCW/NWO Revenge	10/98	$54.99

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Darklight Conflict	08/97	$39.99
Enemy Zero	12/97	$31.99
FIFA Soccer 98	12/97	$44.99
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Sega Ages	11/97	$39.99
Shining Force 3	08/98	$42.99
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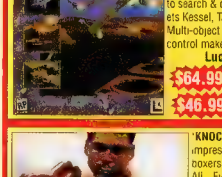

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Blood 2	10/98	$39.99
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Carmageddon 2	12/98	$44.99
Centipede	10/98	$37.99
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Dif Jedi Knight W/ Sith	09/98	$38.99
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Drakan	01/99	$39.99
Duke Nukem Forever	12/98	$48.99
Dune 2000	09/98	$39.99
EverQuest	02/99	$44.99
Fallout 2	10/98	$44.99
FIFA Soccer 99	11/98	$42.99
Final Fantasy VII	06/98	$32.99
Force Commander	02/99	$49.99
Grand Prix Legends	10/98	$44.99
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Armored Core Proj Phnts	09/98	$11.99
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Breath of Fire 3	06/98	$13.99
Brigandine	12/98	$11.99
C & C Red Alrt Retltn	09/98	$11.99
Castlevania 64	11/98	$17.99
Conker's Quest 12 Tales	01/99	$10.99
Fifth Element	10/98	$16.99
Kartia	09/98	$12.99
Legacy Kain Soul Reaver	01/99	$10.99
Legend of Zelda 64	11/98	$12.99
Lunar Silver Star Comp	09/98	$11.99
Metal Gear Solid	11/98	$10.99
Mortal Kombat 4	06/98	$11.99
Ninja	09/98	$10.99
Silent Hill	01/99	$10.99
Spyro the Dragon	09/98	$11.99
Suikoden 2	11/98	$12.99
Tomb Raider 3	11/98	$11.99
Turok 2	10/98	$9.99
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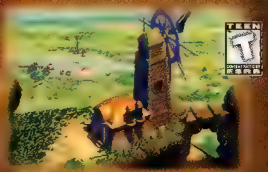

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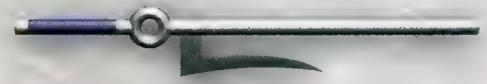

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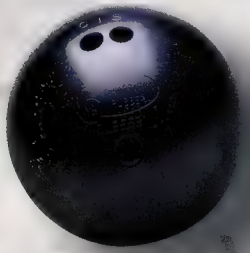

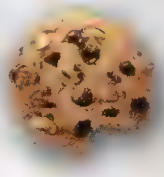

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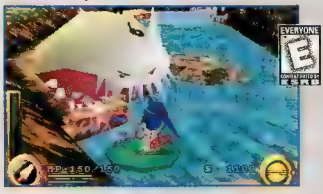

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How To Import

How-To—Round Three...

This feature is third in our series of how-to articles designed to help you get the most out of the gaming hobby. Watch for new installments every month. Next time, we'll dive into a mountain of code devices and show you how to cheat like a pro.

By James Mielke

Japanese Videogames

Game importing—a topic that, to many, seems as exotic and foreign as the games themselves. Who imports games from Japan and why do they do it? What kind of games do they import and where do they get 'em from? Well, for starters, importing is the only place you'll ever get your paws on obscure but highly desired RPGs like Arc the Lad or Sakura Wars. And some gamers just don't have the patience to sit through the extensive delays we Americans often suffer waiting for popular titles to be converted—Tekken 2 and Final Fantasy VII being two excellent examples.

Despite efforts by game companies to speed up the localization process, gamers still import massive quantities of Japanese titles for reasons other than the long wait for a U.S. version. Gaming otaku (hardcore fans and collectors), for instance, can't stomach the often amateurish cover art that replaces the once-cool packaging of the original Japanese games (see Street Fighter Alpha), while others prize the deluxe extras stuffed with the original versions (Dracula X's art book and bonus music CD being prime examples). Oh, and then you have those guys who just can't get enough games starring cute schoolgirls. But ultimately, some gamers are stuck in a tough-luck situation and have no choice but to turn to the grey market. Take Saturn users for example. Unlike the United States, the Saturn still thrives in Japan and new titles hit the shelves on a weekly basis. Although dwindling in number because of the Dreamcast's looming release, games like Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter and Shining Force III Scenarios 2 and 3 are highly anticipated here, but you'll need to import them to play 'em.

Whatever fuels your impulse to import, our nine-page how-to guide will show you where to get the games, how to get 'em working on your system(s)—even how to understand some of the Japanese text. So read on. We'll have you swimmin' in schoolgirls in no time.

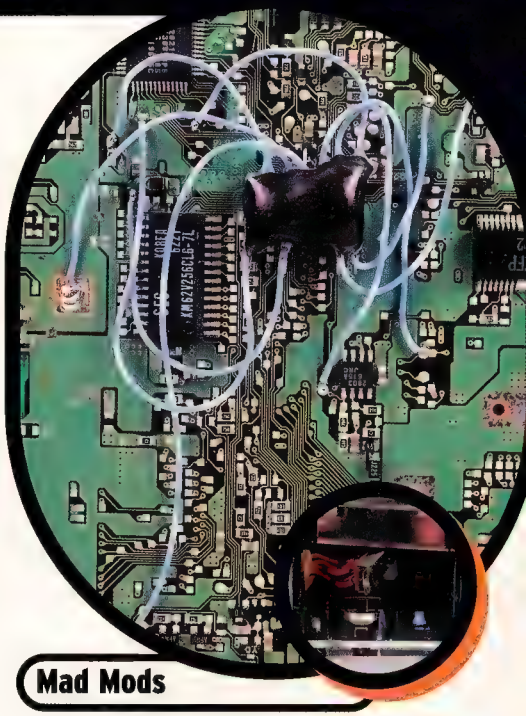
First, a word from our sponsors...

To make a long story short, Nintendo, Sega and Sony really, really hate the import scene. It cuts into profits of games eventually scheduled for release here (prime examples include Street Fighter Alpha 2, Soul Edge, Metal Gear Solid, etc.) and creates anguish among the decision makers when games of a controversial nature make their way over without a publisher's say so. Licensing also raises the occasional problem, such as when a company like Sega has a working relationship with Pepsi in Japan, but a contract with Coca-Cola in America (remember Fighting Vipers and Pepsiman?). And on the simplest level, the big three try to control software importing and system modifications because of concerns over pirating and bootleg games. That's a legitimate concern if there ever was one, but if these companies knew what was good for them, they would watch the import-gaming scene a little closer to gauge interest in niche titles.

None of these company-line gripes, however, has put much of a dent in the import-game hobby. With the Internet being the gamer's greatest tool, fans all over the world have set up independent sites devoted to import games, news, Easter eggs and GameShark codes and FAQ sites with walk-throughs of even the most Kanji-intensive RPGs. So, despite efforts by companies like Sony to squash the importing of software from Japan, the scene still thrives. So far, gamers have managed to adapt to every new lock-out trick that console manufacturers have sprung on them.

The Easy Way?

Sure, you could buy Japanese systems to play import games, but mods and converter carts are cheaper.



Mad Mods

Modding your PlayStation (above) or Saturn (inset) is messy and voids your warranty.

Under the knife...

So how do you play Japanese games in the comfort and safety of your own home? The easiest way (if there's any "easy" way) would be to buy the original Japanese systems. However, if you want to play U.S. games too (and who doesn't?), you'll have to get U.S. systems as well, making this the most expensive option. That being said, the next best thing is to find out how to convert or modify your console so that it will bypass the regional lock-out codes or security measures implemented to restrict unauthorized software.

For fans of the most successful next-generation console, the PlayStation, playing import games has never been easy. To this day, no one has been able to come up with a converter for the system. Although it was rumored that Datel had, at one point, solved that little problem, scuttlebutt says the big S put an end to that quick.

However, gamers who had their PlayStations from the very outset were in luck, sort of. The first batch of systems could be fooled into thinking they had a domestic piece of software in them, no matter what you stuck under the lid. This technique—called the "swap trick"—involved starting up the PlayStation with a U.S. title and swapping it with a Japanese game via the CD-player Mode, while using a pushpin to make the system work with its CD door propped open. We recommend you don't even bother trying this sloppy trick. Not only is it a pain in the ass—it's also widely believed to damage your system. And

Do-it-yourself N64 Surgery

Nintendo's reliance on a physical lock-out device rather than chip-based protection makes modding the system yourself a snap. All you need is a screwdriver and a special tool (pictured in the center) for opening the console's casing. (Most of the mail-order stores we list later in the feature carry this inexpensive wrench.)

Once you've unscrewed and opened the casing (and note that you'll need to unplug the jumper pak to do so), take a look at the gray guard hanging beneath the cartridge port (1). It is this chunk of plastic that physically keeps Japanese carts from fitting into your N64. So, the obvious solution here is to remove the guard with a screwdriver (2).

Now, with the guard removed you'll notice there's nothing left to hold the cartridge port's dust covers in place. You have two options here. One is to simply seal the system back up and cast aside the guard and dust-cover assembly (3). Your N64 will now play both U.S. and Japanese games, and you can leave a cartridge in the console at all times to protect its port from dust. Or you can use a drill to chip away the guard's plastic tabs that physically block the insertion of Japanese carts, then re-attach the guard and dust covers beneath the cartridge port and close up your system. It's a little more work, but at least your N64 won't look naked without its dust covers.

even when you get the games to work, their music and FMV is notoriously skippy. Besides, Sony got wise and made it impossible to use the swap trick in later revisions of the hardware (the 5500 series and above).

The only thing left to do now is get a system modification. Option one is to haul or mail your system to an import shop, where they'll install an unobtrusive chip that causes the PlayStation to bypass the regional lock-out code. The second option, of course, is to do the work yourself—if you have a mod-chip, a schematic and some soldering skills. Anyone with a mod-chip installed in their system should know that it voids the PlayStation's warranty. Plus, Sony refuses to repair any systems that have been modified. To many it's worth the risk, since there's always other places to get systems repaired when they break down.

Since there are now so many shops where you can get mod-chips installed, we won't even begin to list them. But you can find a huge number of online companies that handle this relatively simple modification. Just do a little digging with your favorite search engine and you'll find one, or ask around at your local game store. Also note that according to recent rumors, newer configurations of the PlayStation, namely, the Dual Shock package, wouldn't be "modifiable." Luckily, this isn't the case, and with the average system-mod costing around $25-40 and the recent system price drop, now's as good a time as any to get into the import scene.

For Saturn fans, the road to import-gaming glory has always been an easier path, and rightly so, considering the hardships they've faced. Unless you were thinking of playing King of Fighters '95, all you used to need was a

Saturn Super Carts

Four-in-ones act as a RAM cart, cheat cart and converter cart—all for less than $40. Better still, they really work!

converter that fit into the cartridge-slot on top of the Saturn. These converters were made by more than a few companies, so finding one was never a hassle. The real challenge came when SNK, and later Capcom, released games that required new 1-Meg and 4-Meg RAM carts, respectively. While it was possible to "swap" converter cartridges with RAM carts once the converters did their job, doing so fried quite a few Saturns. Can you imagine constantly ripping out your converter and slamming in a RAM cart every time you wanted to play X-Men vs. Street Fighter?

Newer models of the GameShark for Saturn also act as a converter (by pressing X, Y and Z at the Start-up Screen), but, as we explained, these are not recommended for playing RAM cart games, since they occupy the cartridge-slot. Instead, look for another type of product that has made a name for itself—the four-in-one cartridge. Available from different manufacturers, these handy gizmos act as a converter, memory card, cheat cart and RAM cart all in one. The first four-in-one carts were problematic in that they only played certain RAM-cart games but not others. Vampire Savior, for example, could only be played with a four-in-one if you modified the cartridge. Manufacturers are updating these carts all the time, however, and you should have few problems with a recent version.

Of course, if you don't want to deal with cartridge converters at all, you can always modify your Saturn, which, like the PlayStation, can be modded by import shops or by yourself if you're technologically savvy. Unlike the PlayStation, the Saturn requires a little rewiring and the installation of a mod-switch. This little switch—which is most commonly installed on the back of the Saturn or on the side—flips up if you're playing domestic games and flips down if you want to play import games. The mod-switch route is the best way to go for people who want to play games that require RAM carts (i.e., Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter, Vampire Savior, Metal Slug, King of Fighters '97, etc.), since it frees up the cartridge slot on top of the Saturn.

Nintendo never really ventured to the highest technological peaks to prevent the playing of imported games on its hardware. The big N's lockouts were purely physical and not electronic, which is why converters for the Super NES, and now the N64, are easily obtained. The key to Nintendo's lockout system is found on the cartridges themselves. Little tabs on the bottom of the carts are arranged to fit into either U.S. or Japanese systems. The converters you can buy merely act as a middle-man; they're simple, $15 plastic docking bays that fit into the Nintendo's cartridge slot and accept both U.S. and Japanese games into the top. (Note that the N64 GameShark will *not* work as a pass-through converter for all games, such as Yoshi's Story.) For those of you who prefer less clunky-looking methods of getting your N64 to sit up, roll over and play import games, check out our simple step-by-step method of making your favorite 64-Bit console import-friendly.

Lucky Japanese

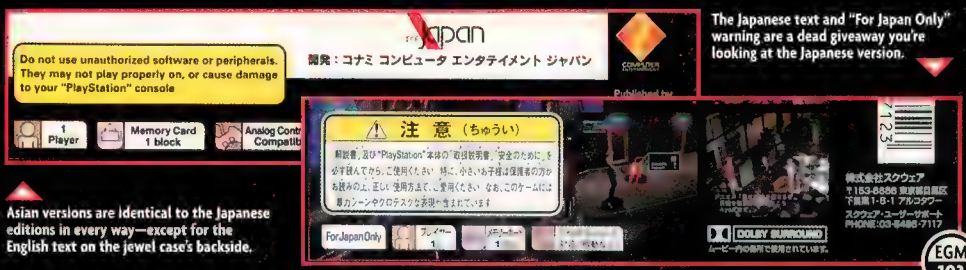
We get a manual. Japanese gamers get music CDs, art books and more in special editions of hot games.

The Hong Kong Connection

PlayStation owners keen on importing games can sometimes get a little help when trying to overcome the language barrier. Japanese PlayStation titles are shipped in two versions—the standard Japanese package and a special "Asian version." Unlike the Japanese jewel case, the Asian version comes with an extra instruction manual printed in English (included mainly for English-speaking people in Hong Kong). This manual makes it much easier to hop into the game without having to translate button commands or basic gameplay goals.

Unfortunately, getting your paws on an Asian version is often a matter of luck. First of all, many sales associates at import-game stores probably won't know the difference between the Japanese and Asian versions, so you're likely to get the luck of the draw when they ship your game. (Note that the stores we listed in this feature will know the difference—except for EB, which doesn't sell import PlayStation games.) Secondly, Asian versions might not always be available to U.S. game-import shops. All you can really do is specify that you want the Asian version when you place your order, then hope for the best.

If you visit an import-game store and can examine the merchandise, check the back of the jewel cases. Asian versions will have English text alongside the number-of-player and memory-card icons located at the bottom-left corner of the casing. Japanese versions will only have Japanese text, with the additional "For Japan Only" notice crammed beside the icons. Finally, remember that only PlayStation games come in Asian versions; Saturn and Nintendo games will ship with Japanese manuals only. (Sorry—no word yet on whether we'll see Asian versions of Dreamcast games.)



The Japanese text and "For Japan Only" warning are a dead giveaway you're looking at the Japanese version.

Asian versions are identical to the Japanese editions in every way—except for the English text on the jewel case's backside.

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PlayStation

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The ABCs of Japanese

Importing games is one thing; understanding them is something else entirely. You have two options if you want to make heads or tails of all that squiggly text in your Japanese games. You can spend about three years in classes learning how to read and speak this amazingly complex language, then spend another two years in Japan to hone your Nihongo skills.

Or, option two: Just grab a Katakana chart and wing it.

Katakana, one of the three Japanese alphabets, is used in games mainly for menu commands, character and place names—basically, all non-Japanese terms. Katakana's main convenience for importers is that it's often used to phonetically spell out English words for Japanese gamers (most of whom learned English in school). Take a basic Menu Option like "start," for example. In Katakana, the word is written スタート, using the phonetic symbols for SU, TA and TO, with the dash between TA and TO indicating a drawn-out sound for the vowel that proceeds the dash (the letter A, or the "ahhh" sound, in this case). Now, when you put those sounds together in your head, you get "SUTAATO," which sounds like "start" if you say it fast enough.

We're sure all this talk of long vowels and multiple alphabets sounds awfully confusing to anyone who doesn't know the Japanese lingo. Don't worry about it. Just study the Katakana chart we've provided, which includes every Katakana symbol and its corresponding phonetic equivalent. Then see how these symbols are arranged for the Katakana words in our list of common Japanese terms. Practice decoding Katakana long enough, and you'll get the hang of it.

Now, if Katakana was all there was to the Japanese written language, then every U.S. gamer would have no problem understanding Japanese games. It just ain't that easy. Remember that Katakana is only used to spell out English and other non-Japanese words. You still have two other alphabets to worry about, both of which are used to spell Japanese words. Hiragana is the simpler of the two (in fact, it was originally designed for Japanese schoolchildren). The other is Kanji, an incredibly ornate collection of more than 3,500 symbols that you'll never be able to learn completely in your lifetime.

But here's the tricky part—all three alphabets are often used interchangeably in Japanese text, so you'll likely see Katakana, Hiragana and Kanji words in the same paragraph. Which alphabet is used typically depends on a game's target audience. Japanese titles geared toward older gamers, such as Final Fantasy Tactics, pack plenty of Kanji text, while kids' games will be heavy with Hiragana. (Note that Game Boy games rarely use Kanji, since the handheld's tiny screen lacks the resolution to show such complex characters).

But even if you're playing the most Kanji-intensive Japanese RPG in the universe, a little Katakana know-how still goes a long way. Remember, Menu Options will almost always be in Katakana, but—more importantly—so will the names of characters and kingdoms in RPGs. Say you're stuck in an RPG and wading through a sea of Kanji dialogue, but then a word in Katakana appears in the middle of a sentence. If, after you sound out the symbols using our Katakana chart, the word turns out to be the name of a character or place in the game, chances are you should visit that city or person to get to the next point in your quest.

Of course, many Japanese games feature a few extra-tricky puzzles that only gamers fluent in Japanese can solve. When you come up against such "gaijin protection," you're probably best off checking online for a walk-through or FAQ (www.gamefaqs.com should have everything you need). Or maybe you should just wait until the game hits the States. After all, what's the point of playing an intricate, beautifully crafted Japanese RPG like Xenogears or Final Fantasy VIII if you don't even understand the story?

Must-know Nihongo

Even if you don't wanna screw around with our Katakana chart (after all, games are supposed to be fun, not homework), you should still take a gander at a few basic words that are guaranteed to pop up frequently in your imported games. So keep the below list of Katakana menu terms (left) and common Kanji words (right) handy. You'll be surprised at how often you'll see 'em used in import titles.

start	sutaato	スタート	
option	opushon	オプション	
menu	menyuu	メニュー	
controller	kontoroora	コントローラ	
button	botan	ボタン	
mode	moodo	モード	
game	geemu	ゲーム	
load	roodo	ロード	
save	seebu	セーブ	
file	fairu	ファイル	
memory card	memoriikaado	メモリーカード	
status	suteetasu	ステータス	
item	aitemu	アイテム	
cancel	kyanseru	キャンセル	
select	serekuto	セレクト	
sound	saundo	サウンド	
stereo	sutereo	ステレオ	
monaural	monoraru	モノラル	

up	ue	上	
down	shita	下	
right	migi	右	
left	hidari	左	
north	kita	北	
south	minami	南	
east	higashi	東	
west	nishi	西	
magic	mahou	魔法	
fire	hi	火	
water	mizu	水	
wind	kaze	風	
lightning	kaminari	雷	
ice	koori	氷	
earth	tsuchi	土	
town	machi	町	
village	mura	村	
monster	kaibutsu	怪物	

Katakana at a Glance

Clip it. Study it. Use it for reference.

a	ka	sa	ta	na	ha	ma	ya	ra	wa	n/m
ア	カ	サ	タ	ナ	ハ	マ	ヤ	ラ	ワ	ン
i	ki	shi	chi	ni	hi	mi		ri		
イ	キ	シ	チ	ニ	ヒ	ミ		リ		
u	ku	su	tsu	nu	fu	mu	yu	ru		
ウ	ク	ス	ツ	ヌ	フ	ム	ユ	ル		
e	ke	se	te	ne	he	me		re		
エ	ケ	セ	テ	ネ	ヘ	メ		レ		
o	ko	so	to	no	ho	mo	yo	ro		
オ	コ	ソ	ト	ノ	ホ	モ	ヨ	ロ		

ga	za	da	ba	pa
ガ	ザ	ダ	バ	パ
gi	ji		bi	pi
ギ	ジ		ビ	ピ
gu	zu		bu	pu
グ	ズ		ブ	プ
ge	ze	de	be	pe
ゲ	ゼ	デ	ベ	ペ
go	zo	do	bo	po
ゴ	ゾ	ド	ボ	ポ

Kyoko © Capcom 1998

kya	sha	cha	nya	hya	mya	rya
キャ	シャ	チャ	ニャ	ヒャ	ミャ	リャ
kyu	shu	chu	nyu	hyu	myu	ryu
キュ	シュ	チュ	ニュ	ヒュ	ミュ	リュ
kyo	sho	cho	nyo	hyo	myo	ryo
キョ	ショ	チョ	ニョ	ヒョ	ミョ	リョ

gya	ja	bya	pya
ギャ	ジャ	ビャ	ピャ
gyu	ju	byu	pyu
ギュ	ジュ	ビュ	ピュ
gyo	jo	byo	pyo
ギョ	ジョ	ビョ	ピョ

How to Tell 'em Apart:

You should have little problem recognizing Katakana in Japanese text. Hiragana is less angular, while Kanji is much more ornate.

Katakana	ネ	ヌ
Hiragana	ぽ	ぬ
Kanji	戦	裏

Wheelers and Dealers...

OK, so you've either got your system ready to play import games or you're about to make that move. Now you just need the games (or maybe a converter cart to play the games). But you're probably brimming with questions, too. Where do you go to find the games? What do you look for in an import shop? Who has the best selection, price and service? Does anyone take preorders so you're not the last person on your block with a copy of Marvel vs. Capcom? So we've provided, for your convenience, a small list of companies that have, in one way or another, earned enough respect from the gaming community to provide a comforting head-start into the world of import gaming. Here goes...

Tronix

http://www.tronixweb.com/
347 Fifth Avenue, Suite #1508
New York, NY 10016
Tel: (212) 447-5980
Fax: (212) 727-8934

Offering both Japanese *and* U.S. games for all systems, Tronix may just be your one-stop shopping haven. Prices are extremely competitive, selection is excellent and customer service is superb. Import games arrive often on the same day of their Japanese release (and in the case of Saturn games—sometimes a couple of days *before* they hit Japan). Their Web site is nicely designed and easy to navigate, and it's updated on a daily basis. Whenever we at *EGM* are not buying our import games direct from Japan, we're usually buying them from Tronix.

Buy-Rite Video Games
http://www.buyrite1.com/
3132 Calvary Drive, Suite #107
Raleigh, NC 27604
Tel: (919) 850-9473
Fax: (919) 872-7561

Although their selection isn't as extensive as NCS's is, their prices are generally the best on the Net. Finding prices lower than these is next to impossible. However, their back-catalogue of older games is not as well-stocked as you might like. In addition to offering weekly specials, they also stock misc. Japanese goods (like magazines, toys and guide books). Definitely worth looking into, though not as well-rounded as Tronix or NCS.

National Console Support
http://www.ncsx.com/
121 Baxter St. Suite #1
New York, NY 10013
Tel: (718) 523-5774
Fax: (718) 523-7069

One of the premier importers on the Net, NCS is known for their timely arrivals and comprehensive selection. Besides carrying Japanese games, they also carry Japanese magazines and models, plus they update their site on a (mostly) daily basis. One nice thing about NCS is that they tend to keep a lot of older import titles in stock longer than Tronix, so if you're just dying to get your hands on "vintage" imports like Hermie Hopperhead or Darius II, you might have better luck checking with NCS. With some of the best prices on the Net, NCS should be one of the first places you check.

The Rage
http://www.therage.com/
P.O. Box 2310
Ronkonkoma, NY 11779
Tel: (516) 467-1679
Fax: (212) 208-4668

The Rage is another good alternative for import and domestic titles on the Web, although they don't offer anything major that you won't find elsewhere on any of the aforementioned sites. Their prices are a tad bit more expensive, too. They do have a nice selection, however, and a good reputation among game buyers on the Net. Be sure to stop here when comparison shopping.

Electronics Boutique

http://www.ebworld.com/

Although this nationwide chain is mainly known for being one of the best spots (if not *the* best) to purchase U.S. games, many locations carry import Saturn titles as well. They usually pick up some of the best Japanese releases (i.e. most Capcom games, big-name games like Deep Fear and Radiant Silvergun, etc.), so new title-starved Saturn fans can get their fix.

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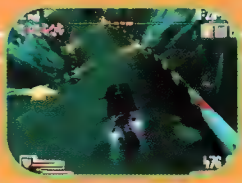

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Acclaim

NINTENDO 64

Import Games to Get...

Now that you know how to import Japanese games, what are you waiting for? Go get 'em! To start you off, we've selected several must-play imports that may never make it to the States. But keep in mind the list of cool stuff certainly doesn't end here. Depending on your interests, you'll want to check out Phantasy Star Collection, Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon, ASCII's "maker" series, the Saturn version of Dracula X: Nocturne in the Moonlight, the excellent Saturn shooter Soukyugurentai, etc., etc., etc....An entire nation of games awaits.

Saturn

TITLE ..... Radiant Silvergun
PUBLISHER ..... ESP/Treasure

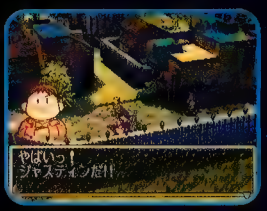
Originally programmed on Sega's Saturn-friendly ST-V board, the home conversion of Treasure's horizontal-shooter masterpiece is arcade-perfect. Add in the Story Mode (complete with additional animation designed by the Guardian Heroes team), an innovative control scheme, an excellent soundtrack, rendered on-the-fly cutscenes and numerous secrets, and you've got the shooter equivalent of Tekken 3. With its extremely limited amount of Japanese text (and who really cares about that in a shooter anyway?), Radiant Silvergun is a must-import title that belongs in every gamer's library.

TITLE ..... Capcom's 4-Meg Fighting Games
PUBLISHER ..... Capcom

If you're looking for perfect ports of Capcom's latest and greatest 2D arcade fighters, then you know the PlayStation definitely is *not* the place to find them. The closest you'll get to perfection is by importing the Saturn versions from Japan. Beginning last year with X-Men vs. Street Fighter and continuing with Vampire Savior, Pocket Fighter and the soon-to-be-released Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter (but no SF Zero 3, darnit), Capcom has been releasing their games with a 4-Meg RAM cartridge that significantly increases game performance (larger characters, better sound, more animation) while at the same time decreasing load times to nearly nil (except for the initial load sequence). You only need to purchase the RAM cartridge once (each game is packed either alone or bundled with the cart), and the end result is a must for Capcom fans. As a side note, Marvel Super Heroes was released in Japan with a 1-Meg RAM cart (the U.S. version is compatible with it, even though the cartridge was not released here), which also increases game performance, though to a much lesser degree than the 4-Meg cart.

TITLE ..... Grandia
PUBLISHER ..... ESP/Game Arts

When Sega of America passed on porting over Grandia to the United States, it was like the equivalent of Sony having said, "Nah, that Final Fantasy VII crap doesn't look too hot. Next!" Saturn owners around the country cried a collective bleat of anguish as yet another highly desired piece of software was denied release in America. Since a PlayStation release is doubtful (it's too texture-heavy), and a Dreamcast version would still be over a year away, Saturn RPG fans have no other choice but to import this fantastic RPG. Sure, not being able to read the story is a big sacrifice, but in the case of a game as amazing as Grandia, it's not all that unbearable.



A glorious RPG that's as grand as any you've seen before, Grandia is the Rolls-Royce of Saturn RPGs and one of Game Arts' finest moments. When it comes down to either A) not playing an incredible game at all, ever, or B) at least trying to get through it in Japanese, with limited knowledge of the story, choice B is almost always the better alternative.

TITLE ..... Shining Force III Scenarios 2 and 3
PUBLISHER ..... Sega

Let's face it—if you've played through the U.S. version of Shining Force III (Scenario 1), you're probably pretty darn upset about the ending. Yes, it was a fantastic ending (and a darn long one, too), but it was a cliffhanger! Why? Because it's only part one of a trilogy that's never going to be completed in the U.S.! (Not on the Saturn, anyway...)

Even though the story is the most important part of an RPG like this, fans may still want to consider importing Scenarios 2 and 3 from Japan (both of which are available now). Surprisingly, your completed save data from Scenario 1 will work with the Japanese versions of Scenario 2 and 3. So while you may not be able to fully understand what's going on, you'll at least be able to continue your journey. Oddly enough, when you do this, any names of characters that appeared in Scenario 1 will show up on-screen in English in Scenarios 2 and 3. It may be a daunting task, but it's one fans of the series will surely enjoy, and thanks to Shining Force's mostly iconic menus, the language barrier won't be all that much of a distraction in actual gameplay.

For more info on Scenario 3 in the SFIII saga, check out our international preview of it on page 164.

And Finally, the Dreamcast

You'd be perfectly within your right to stalk and kill us if we didn't mention importing the Dreamcast. Trouble is, as of press time, none of the import stores have firmed up any details. Here's what we know: The system will hit stores in Japan on Nov. 27 for 29,800 yen (roughly $250). The import stores will receive their shipments on that day or slightly before, and they won't announce their Dreamcast prices until a few days before launch. Expect to pay significantly more than $250 to import the system (prices as high as $400 are not unlikely).

Also note that Sega's only planning to produce around 400,000 units for launch. So, while DC games won't be hard to come by, the system itself certainly will. If you haven't preordered a Dreamcast by now (the import stores have maintained waiting lists for some time), don't expect to get one until long after the holidays. In fact, the import stores probably won't finish filling preorders until late January.

But don't give up. Shop around and preorder anyway. Or wait a bit until the supply replenishes. A little hunting will get you a DC sooner rather than later.

PlayStation

TITLE ..... Tobal 2
PUBLISHER ..... Square

Tobal 2 has quickly become one of the most notorious games never to come stateside. Universally lauded as a huge improvement over the first, Tobal 2 sat atop many a gamer's wish list, even two years after its release. With more than 200 playable characters, an enhanced Quest Mode, and CG endings to boot, Tobal 2 has everything hardcore gamer's crave.

TITLE ..... R-Types
PUBLISHER ..... Irem

Despite several companies showing interest in bringing it to the United States, it looks as if R-Types (arcade-perfect conversions of R-Type and its little-seen sequel R-Type II) is going to stay in Japan (and Europe—lucky Brits!). Not much needs to be said about this one—R-Type is one of the most masterfully designed side-scrolling shooters ever, and its sequel is nearly as amazing (and harder, too!).

TITLE ..... Final Fantasy IV & V
PUBLISHER ..... Square

While we've been living it up with Final Fantasy VII on the PlayStation, Japanese gamers have been enjoying slightly enhanced ports of two Super NES masterpieces—Final Fantasy IV (II in the United States), and Final Fantasy V (widely believed to be the best in the series, though it still never made it to the United States). The games are direct ports of the Super NES versions, which is a little disappointing (graphical upgrades a la Mario All-Stars would've ruled), but they do have some real spiffy FMV scenes thrown in. And they are, after all, timeless classics.

Final Fantasy fanatics may want to check these out for the new FMV scenes, and in the case of FFV, to see what all the fuss has been about (though not understanding Japanese is obviously going to lessen the experience significantly). What might be a better idea is to start writing to Square EA, requesting that they release these games (or at least FFV, since it's never been here, period) in English.

TITLE . Capcom Generations Series
PUBLISHER ..... Capcom

With the U.S. release suddenly in limbo, gamers looking forward to the Capcom Generations series may want to look to Japan for these classic compilation packs. Vol. 1 contains three classic shooters (1942, 1943 and 1943 kai). But Vol 2. is the big one. Nobody should be without Ghosts 'N' Goblins, Ghouls 'N' Ghosts and Super Ghouls 'N' Ghosts—all on one disc. The rest of the series is pretty bland, except for the Street Fighter II Collection, which may still make it to the States anyhow. Note that the series is available on the PlayStation, too.

Nintendo 64 • Game Boy

TITLE ..... Pokémon Stadium (N64), Pokémon Pikachu (GB)
PUBLISHER ..... Nintendo

Sadly, there aren't many N64 games worth importing, but if you've been sucked into the Pokémon phenomenon, you may want to check out Pokémon Stadium for the N64. PS lets you take your Game Boy Pokémon and play it on the N64 (it comes with controller pak that lets you slot in the Game Boy cartridge) in full 3D—sorta. You can't actually play the one-player game in 3D, but you can do battle with either the CPU or a second player. And here's another catch: Only 40 (of the 150) Pokemon are playable in Pokémon Stadium. The others can only be viewed in a 3D Pokedex.

Since Pokémon Stadium will *not* work with the U.S. version of Pokémon, it's hard for us to fully recommend it. A basic understanding of Japanese is needed, and without a Japanese version of the Game Boy Pokémon (which will play fine in your U.S. Game Boy, by the way), there won't be much for you to do with it.

Elsewhere in the land of Pokemon is the new Pokémon Pikachu for the Game Boy. Also known as Pokémon Yellow, this latest (fourth) installment of Pokémon is basically the same as the original three, except that you start the game with Pikachu, and he follows you around (on-screen) throughout the game. His voice sample from the cartoon is even in the game! You can also connect Pokémon Yellow to a Game Boy Printer and print out monster stats. For serious Pokémon freaks only.

TITLE ..... Dragon Quest Monsters: Terry's Wonderland
PUBLISHER ..... ENIX

Just released in Japan at the end of September, this first Game Boy installment of the mega-popular Dragon Quest (Dragon Warrior) series is also compatible with the Game Boy Color. The largest Game Boy game ever released (at 16-Megs it's double the size of the biggest game released before it), DQ Monsters is two parts classic Dragon Quest (which is to say it's a fabulous RPG), and one part Pokémon (with a link cable you can pit your monsters against your friends'). If Nintendo's smart they'll bring this one to the States themselves, but in the meantime, Dragon Warrior fans dying for a new game may want to check it out. It's rather text-heavy, but it won't be *too* difficult for DQ/DW vets to figure out. And remember, the U.S. Game Boy needs no modifications to play Japanese carts.

Import Release List

PlayStation:

Legaia Legend 10/29
SCE, RPG
Smash Court 2 ..... 11/12
Namco, Tennis
R-Type Delta 11/19
Irem, Shooter
Poporoogu 11/26
SCE, RPG
R4: Ridge Racer Type 4 ..... 12/3
Namco, Racing
Ehrgeiz 12/17
Square, Fighting
Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon 2 12/23
Square, Action RPG
Tales of Phantasia 12/23
Namco, RPG
Genso Suikoden II ... December
Konami, RPG
SF Zero 3 ..... December
Capcom, Fighting

Saturn:

MSH vs. SF 10/22
Capcom, Fighting
Strikers 1945 ..... 10/22
Psikyo, Shooter
Falcom Classics II 10/29
Japan Victor, RPG
Grandia Memorial Package ... 11/26
ESP, RPG
Capcom Generation 5 SF2 Col. ... 12/12
Capcom, Fighting

Dreamcast:

Virtua Fighter 3tb 11/27
Sega, Fighting
Sega Rally 2 ..... 11/27
Sega, Racing
Blue Stinger 12/3
Sega, Adventure
Geist Force 12/10
Sega, Shooter
Sonic Adventure 12/17
Sega, Action

Note that this list highlights only high-profile Japanese releases up until Dec. 31, and not all of these games will be easy to play if you don't know Japanese (some of them are RPGs). As for the lack of N64 Japanese releases, well...truth be told, there's just nothing coming out for the system worth importing.

TEEN
PlayStation

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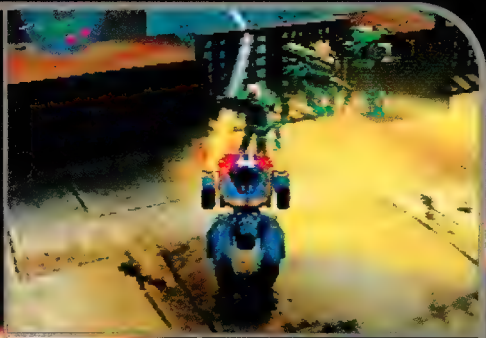

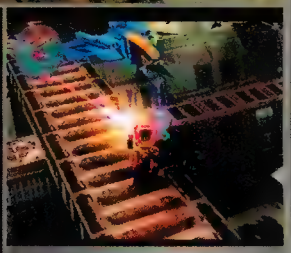

In 2198 AD, LA has gone to hell. Thankfully, hell is within your jurisdiction. Lawless gangs packin' thermo-nukes, bio-agents and other bad mojo are laying seige to the City of Angels. Keep the peace with this piece. Your standard issue hovercraft, walker, and all-purpose justice dispenser. It's like playing "good cop/bad cop" - Only without the good cop.

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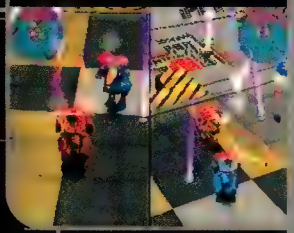

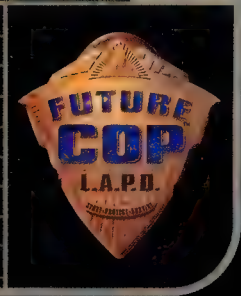

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By Crispin Boyer

How REAL Is Metal Gear Solid?

EGM Examines the Guns and Gadgets of the PlayStation's Most True-to-Life Game

See Snake. See Snake run. See Snake crawl. See Snake snap a drowsy guard's neck. See Snake score six headshots with his SOCOM pistol, FAMAS assault rifle or PSG1 sniper rifle. And see Solid Snake—your brooding, lethal alter ego in Metal Gear Solid—do it all with more gritty, true-to-life attention to detail than you'll find in 10 summer action flicks.

Such high levels of realism to the game's weapons and tactics were hardly a last-minute addition, either. Four years ago, when Metal Gear Solid producer and director Hideo Kojima kicked development into high gear, he and his team embarked on a spy mission of their own. They began exhaustive research into the tools of real-life soldiers', spies' and terrorists' trades. After learning the basics from Internet articles and various books, Kojima—seeking some hands-on trigger time—decided it was time for a field trip.

Since guns are strictly forbidden in Japan, Kojima and his team—which included arms expert Motosada Mori—flew to the United States, where buying and shooting weapons is only slightly more difficult than joining Sam's Club. Their first stop was Los Angeles' Stembridge Gun Rentals Inc. Here, and in a few other ranges around Hollywood and Little Tokyo, they shot a variety of pistols and rifles, some of which wound up in the finished game. (Oh, and as an interesting side-note, Little Tokyo is home to several shooting ranges that cater to adult Japanese tourists craving the experience of shooting a real gun. In fact, our own Sushi-X visited one.)

Next up, Kojima, Mori and company hung out with the Huntington Beach SWAT and watched these elite troopers go through their drills. Kojima filmed the maneuvers for the game's artists, who referred to the SWAT's formations and stances when it came time to hand-animate Metal Gear Solid's characters. The team even took notes on the SWAT guys' body armor and uniforms.

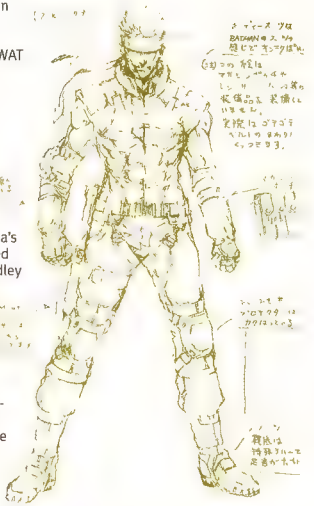
Irwin Military Base, located between L.A. and Las Vegas, was Kojima's final stop in the States. Here he checked out an M1 Abrams tank and an M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle—both of which were filmed for the textures appearing on the in-game tanks. Finally, the team returned to Japan, where they visited a few more military bases for texture reference, as well.

OK, so we know Kojima did his homework. Metal Gear Solid is a triumph of tiny true-life details that make the game both highly cinematic and highly authentic at the same time. But we at EGM wanted to see just how deep the game's realism runs.

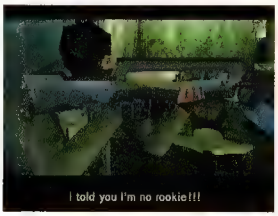
More to the point, we wanted to check out some of the cool gear for ourselves. So we turned to Safety Systems Corporation, a company based near Chicago that sells tactical and assault equipment to law-enforcement agencies, the military—even movie studios (their gear has appeared in *Relic*, *Starship Troopers*, *Demolition Man* and many other flicks). Safety Systems' president, Charles Bicek, dressed our model in authentic Solid Snake and Meryl Silverburgh attire (and if you think you've seen our model before, check the flipside of the centerfold to find out who she is).

We also took Bicek on a minitour of the game, to see if Metal Gear Solid would stand up to the scrutiny of someone who deals with real-life "operators" like Solid Snake on a daily basis. From the get-go, he was impressed. "The start is very

continued on page 213



If it's in the game, chances are you'll find it in the real world, too—and that goes for everything from weapons to tank textures.



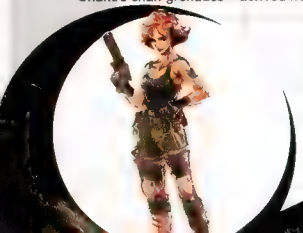
fully automatic weapon that can fill your body with 30 bullets in under two seconds. The FAMAS was built to withstand extreme battlefield conditions, from the searing Saudi dunes of Desert Storm to the icy Alaskan wilderness. Hmm. Who woulda thunk the French could build such a bad-ass gun?

PSG1 Sniper Rifle

Designed by German firm Heckler & Koch, the PSG1 is not only one of the most accurate semiautomatic rifles ever made, it's the world's coolest-looking weapon, too. (Heck, this thing wouldn't look out of place in an Imperial stormtrooper's hands.) The good news: The PSG1 makes it a breeze to reach out and kill someone in MGS. The bad news: Sharpshooting Boss Sniper Wolf wields one, too.

Explosives

Solid Snake stumbles upon plenty of lethal fireworks to bring to the party. Aside from the fragmentary "pineapple" grenades (left), he'll find stun grenades (middle), which unleash a daze-inducing flash-bang combo. Remote-detonated C4 (right) and claymore mines complete his arsenal. Only Snake's chaff grenades—derived from the radar-jamming stuff dropped by fighter jets—are fictional.



Who's that girl? If the model clad in the Solid Snake/Meryl Sylverburgh duds on these pages looks familiar, well...she oughta. She's none other than Kerri Hoskins—the buffest, most digitizable babe in video games—best known as the face and bod behind Sonya Blade in the MK series.

AN-PVS5B Night-vision Goggles

These third-generation goggles from Litton Electro-Optical Systems pack the world's most advanced light-amplification technology. Wanna be like Snake? A pair of your own cost a mere $8,000.

Modular Body Armor

Extra protection you find late in the game. Oddly enough, the muscle-molded armor Snake starts with is make-believe.

Tactical Elbow Pads

Like the kind Rollerbladers use, except Rollerbladers typically don't kill people.

Assault Gloves

Tough gloves for tough guys. Don't rappel from your home without 'em.

Mag Pouches

Keeps spare magazines within easy reach. Just slip them out, slap 'em home and start shootin' stuff.

Spec-Ops Holster

Actually, the full name here is "3005 Special-Ops Tactical Holster." It holds Snake's trusty SOCOM .45 (see flipside).

Frag-Grenade Pouch

So Snake doesn't have far to reach when tossing pineapples with the boys.

BDUs (Black)

Battle-dress utilities are the standard-issue clothing of all soldiers. What, you expect the military to just call 'em pants?

Tactical Knee Pads

Further proof that whether your job has you laying carpet or infiltrating terrorist hideouts, knee owies suck.

Smokes

Snake's only bit of gear at the game's outset. Strange—Sony guidelines always forbade cigarettes in PlayStation games before, so what gives? Hmm.

Combat Boots

Yep, just like your momma wears. Great for hitting the clubs or kicking in teeth, depending on whether they were issued by the U.S. Army or Doc Martens.

Abseil Rope

Abseil is a fancy word for rappel, which in turn is a fancy word for "I'm gonna try to slip 10 stories down this rope without busting my ass."

Laser-Rangefinder Scope

High-end models like Snake's feature digital zoom, image enhancement—even elevation readings. Can't see through clothes, though (but you can't blame us for trying).

SEAL Gloves

Designed specifically for the NAVY's East Coast SEAL teams, these fingerless gloves make for quick trigger work.

NBC Gas Mask

Vital headgear that'll save Snake's tail more than once. Psycho Mantis fancies one himself, for reasons you'll discover when you beat him (and, no, it's not 'cause Liquid Snake ate too much chili).

T-Top

Ideal for tropical assignments (i.e., a day at the beach). Can be used as tourniquet in an emergency (i.e., lawn-dart mishap).

LC Belt

The standard load-carrying belt used to carry holsters, mag pouches, grenades, etc. Oh, it keeps your pants up, too.

BDUs (Camo)

Meryl's camouflage battle-dress utilities have lots of pockets to hold grenades, ammunition, rations—you know, girl stuff.

MPK Spec-Ops Knife

Used by the SEALs for two years with nary a broken blade. This thing'll slice tin cans in two faster than any candy-ass Ginsu.

Ketchup

Tomato-based food condiment that comes in handy near the game's end. Great on fries, too, although rumor has it they use mayo in Amsterdam.

Cardboard Box

Or, as the guards say, "Oh, just a box." Snake finds three in the game, but don't ask us how he gets them to fold up and fit in his pants' pouches.

How REAL Is Metal Gear Solid?

SOCOM • Desert Eagle

Snake's pistola du jour is the trusty SOCOM (Special Operations Command) .45-caliber semiautomatic. No surprise, considering it's the same handgun issued to Navy SEALs, Delta Force and other special-forces bad boys, who often snap on its laser-aiming module and sound suppressor. Meryl prefers the Desert Eagle, a .50-caliber hand cannon she says she's more comfy with than her bra.

FAMAS G2 Assault Rifle

Snake and Meryl aren't the only MGS characters with real weapons. Enemy soldiers and Bosses all carry real gear, too.

The MGS team did most of their research in the United States, where producer/director Hideo Kojima (below) and arms expert Motsosada Mori (above, with the game's principal weapons) fired guns forbidden in Japan.

interesting," Bicek said, watching the opening cinema that has Snake riding his minisub to Shadow Moses Island. "It shows a single-man SDV, and those really exist. They don't launch that way, but they really exist. There are such things as black-ops, too. It's very common. The government won't say you did or didn't do the mission. You go in with no identification, no dog tags. The mission just doesn't exist."

Right, so Metal Gear Solid is scoring fairly high on the reality-o-meter so far. But then we get to the part in the opening brief when Snake learns he'll need to find his own weapons and equipment. Now c'mon—are we expected to believe that real-life operators are sent into battle with nothing but a pack of smokes? "No," Bicek said. "You'd go to the armory at your base and pick up the gear first. And rarely would you go on a mission by yourself. There are no one-man missions. It's always teams."

Of course, if Solid Snake stormed the Alaskan base as part of a team of elite troopers, he just wouldn't be the same mysterious loner whose life gets so friggin' interesting through the course of the game. And if he started the mission loaded to bear with a full complement of guns and gear, Metal Gear Solid wouldn't be a very tough game, now would it?

Speaking of gear, nearly every gun, grenade and gizmo in the game is a bona-fide real-world item. Take Snake's SOCOM, for instance. "It's actually adopted by the special forces now," Bicek said of the Special Operations Command pistol. "They've procured about 2,000, but a lot of operators actually don't like them because they're too heavy and too big. The thing is they'd rather carry a smaller pistol and more ammunition for their primary weapon. The pistol is usually your secondary weapon. The primary is usually an assault rifle."

As further proof that Kojima and his team know their stuff, Snake is actually told via Codec at one point that some field operatives don't like the SOCOM because of its size and weight—exactly the same tidbit Bicek revealed to us. Still, some of Snake's gear borders on make-believe. His mine detector, for instance, is much smaller than current versions. The Nikita missile launcher, which spits tiny missiles that Snake can guide via remote control, has yet to be developed. Bicek said the launcher is probably based on the wire-guided missiles that today's infantry launch and guide into enemy tanks.

"Guns are like women. Some guys like 'em tall, short, blond, brunette, just like guns. Some guys like Glock, some like Sigs, but, performance-wise, everyone looks at the 1911 as the base for the modern pistol." **—Safety Systems president Charles Bicek, when asked if he agreed with the game's claim that the Colt Single Action Army is the greatest handgun ever made.**

And remember—Metal Gear Solid is set nearly a decade into the future, when cool gear like Snake's is sure to be as common as rocket cars, moon bases and fat-free Big Macs.

Metal Gear Solid's attention to detail doesn't end with its weapons or graphics; Bicek found that the control system adequately portrays one tricky bit of real-life combat—shooting while moving. "Running and shooting is tricky, but he's doing good drills right there," Bicek said, watching Snake advance on an enemy while firing. "In fact, firing while walking is very common now among SWAT teams that are at a higher level." The game models this tricky maneuver by forcing you to feather the Crawl button while holding down the Shoot button. It takes some practice, but—just like the elite SWAT teams Bicek mentioned—you can master it in time.

So is Metal Gear Solid the most realistic console game ever? It certainly ranks up there with GoldenEye 007, Bushido Blade and PaRappa the Rapper (never has the forbidden love between a dog and a flower been portrayed with such gritty realism). But just remember that Metal Gear Solid is only a game. If the guards were too smart, or if Snake dropped dead after a single round to the chest, well...just how much fun would that be? And if you ever get too caught up in Snake's world, if the edges between fantasy and reality begin to blur, just have Snake slip under a cardboard box and skitter near some dimwitted guards. The silliness of it'll snap you back to the real world.

"Yeah, that's realistic right there," Bicek said, his voice dripping with sarcasm as he watched Snake prance around in his box a few feet from a guard. "That's one of my favorite ploys—good guys in boxes."

Solid Snake's two-hands-on-the-gun shooting style makes for more accurate aiming than Lara Croft's Hollywood-inspired two-gun highjinks.

Run 'n' Gun

The battlefield equivalent of walking and chewing gum, running while shooting isn't easy in real life. Consequently, you'll have to master a two-button combo for Snake to perform this tricky maneuver in Metal Gear Solid (above).

Solid Snake Vs. Lara Croft

Who'd Kill Who?

He's the PlayStation's toughest hombre. She's its sassiest superchick. But if Solid Snake and Lara Croft ever did tangle by the flagpole, who'd come out on top? We asked Safety Systems' Bicek, who said the answer lies in how the two heroes handle their hardware.

"His stance looks very good," Bicek said, eyeing Snake's two-handed grip on his SOCOM pistol—a grip ideal for spot-on aiming.

When we explained that Lara seems to think two guns are better than one, Bicek decided that the odds were stacked heavily against her. "Shooting with two guns is pretty much only for the movies," Bicek told us. "No one can hit anything with two guns. He'd kill her in a second."

Looks like Lara's finally met her match.

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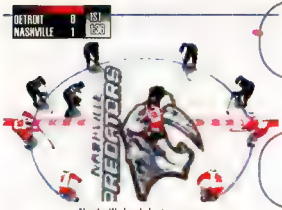

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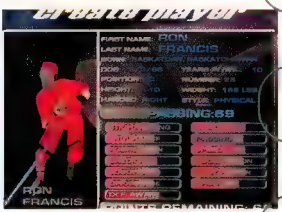

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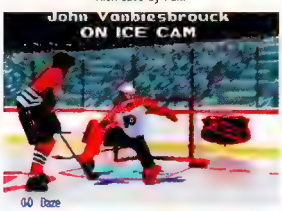

Daze shoots on goal

Smith clears the puck

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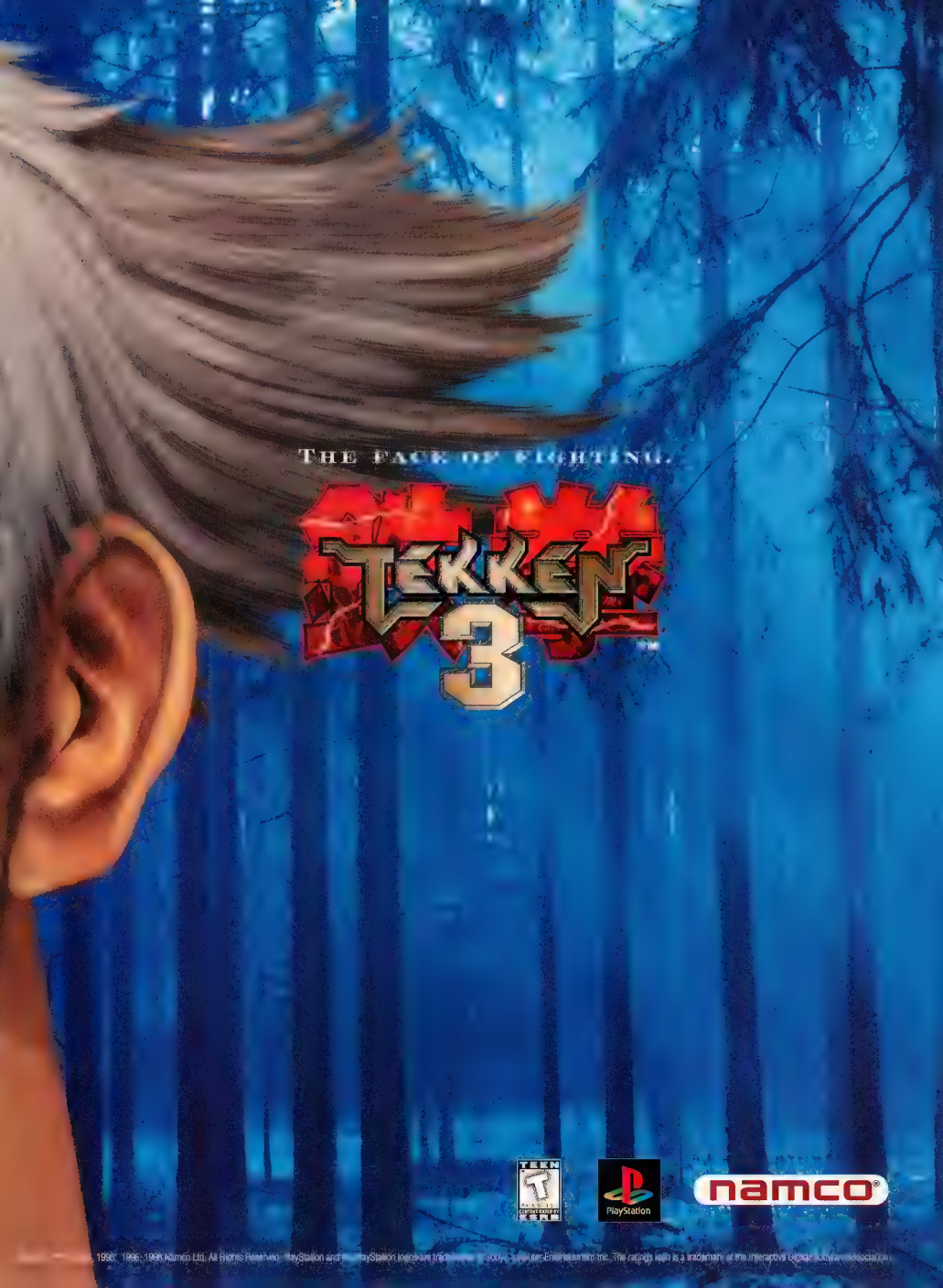

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LOSE 50 LBS. A WEEK BY WANDERING AIMLESSLY -Experts Say

BONUS SECTION REVEALS LINK'S SORDID PAST

LINK NAMED TO WORST-DRESSED LIST!

"GREEN IS *SOOOO* '87"

HYRULE
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40 DEAD IN CHICKEN RAMPAGE!!

48 HOURS IN HYRULE

FATE OF HYRULE RESTS ON SHOULDERS OF 10-YEAR-OLD LAD!!

By Tattler Staff John Davison, Crispin Boyer and John Ricciardi

AUTHORITIES SICKENED

HYRULE RESIDENTS MARVEL AT LIVING IN THREE DIMENSIONS

SCIENTISTS BAFFLED!

48 HOURS IN HYRULE

GALACTIC EXCLUSIVE!!

Here's the cool thing about spending two days in Hyrule: You actually, truly, honestly, really do live there for two entire day/night cycles of genuine Hyrule time. We mean it. The *Hyrule Tattler* should know. Two of its crack reporters, John Davison and Crispin Boyer—along with Videogames.com's James Mielke—spent 48 hours in Link's homeland, questing, fighting, chatting with folks, fishing, horseback riding, watching dozens of sunrises and sunsets (time flies much faster there) and just plain getting sucked into the most immersive game world ever conceived.

We returned from our journeys with tales of impossible sights. We watched young Link get introduced to Navi, his first fairy. We watched old Link emerge from the Time Temple, his massive Master Sword in hand. We watched the aptly named Death Mountain change from a serenely ominous mountain to a nightmarish crag poking through the thunderclouds above a terrorized future Hyrule. We saw titanic Boss creatures that shoot fire, water and electricity. We learned the history of Hyrule, the tale of the three goddesses who built the world and left the Triforce as its guardian of balance and harmony. And, as always, it is this powerful artifact that links Princess Zelda and evil Ganondorf in an epic adventure to determine the fate of Hyrule.

Our meanderings through this world so impressed us, in fact, that we decided to devote this entire issue of the *Hyrule Tattler* to the life and times of one promising young citizen named Link, a 10-year-old resident of Kokiri Village. In the meantime, we can't help marveling at how much Link's current adventure resembles his alleged past, sprite-based exploits. He'll encounter Lost Woods and helpful owls; fairy fountains and familiar sound effects; rupees, maps and compasses; tektites, octoroks and armies of old-school monsters; boomerangs, bows and arrows and hookshots. Even the puzzles ring familiar. Link will push blocks, light torches, blast open secret rooms, hookshot his way across chasms—the works. And all the familiar footwork is only appropriate, seeing as how Link's new adventure is more of a remake than a continuation of any previous adventure.

But don't ye worry, faithful readers. Link's world packs plenty of new surprises, too. Aside from the obvious fact that all of Hyrule's residents now possess a certain 3D depth to their features, Link will find that some puzzles have taken on a Banjo-Kazooie-esque flair. Oh, and if any of you Hyrule residents bother to look out your window, you'll notice we have a working sun and moon now that track across the sky during our 20-minute days and nights. Look long enough and you might just see an older Link galloping across Hyrule Plain on a new friend.

But that's just a taste of what awaits. Dig further into the *Hyrule Tattler* for a look at everything from Link's new control scheme to a fashion review of the kingdom's fanciest dressed lads. Mount up—it's gonna be a breathtaking ride.

SEE A MOUNTAIN TURN INTO A NIGHTMARISH CRAG!

YOU HAVE TO SEE IT TO BELIEVE IT!

The land of Hyrule again proves to be a beautiful place, so much so that it has inspired journalist John Davison to wax lyrical of its virtues. He told the *Tattler* recently, "The scenery is such a joy to behold...even the sky is beautiful. The swirling clouds above Death Mountain are a hypnotic sight that is quite unlike anything else," he commented, in somewhat out-of-character floweriness. "The whole land is unique though. As you wander the plains of Hyrule you can see for miles and nothing ever 'pops out of nowhere' to surprise you. The whole place is just so idyllic and for most of the time the weather is wonderful—there's no mist whatsoever. When the weather does worsen though, the effect of the rain and mist on the countryside only further enhances its beauty."

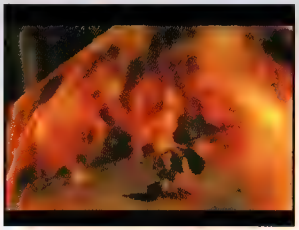
"It's not just what you find above ground though," he continues as *Tattler* reporters were unable to contain his enthusiasm. "Every new location you travel to has a unique character of its own, from the depths of the dungeons and underground caverns, to the streets of each town. The land is so full of such rich textures and beautiful imagery you'll think you've entered another world."

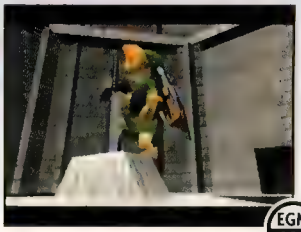
But what of the people and rich creature-culture of Hyrule? "As we spent our time with Link on his travels, we met with all manner of creatures and characters who each had such unique personalities and moved with such grace. From Link's horse, to some of the bizarre creatures found underground, they are all quite exceptional." The *Tattler* is in the enviable situation of being able to provide exclusive pictures from Link's recent adventure that will help illustrate Davison's points. Throughout the pages of this issue you'll see some of the incredible environments, some beautiful effects and illustrations of just how much care Hyrule forefather Shigeru Miyamoto has put into every item in the land.

"We were lucky enough to see some defining moments from a quest of this nature, too," Davison added. "When Link entered the Temple of Time and drew the Master Sword from the stone, the atmosphere of the whole event was just electrifying. There was a brilliant, blinding light and some incredible effects before Link emerged seven years older, sauntering nonchalantly with that bloody great sword. Wow."

The Tattler concurs that this really is something that has to be seen to be believed.

GRAPHICS GOOD ENOUGH TO MAKE CHILDREN WEEP!





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LOSE 50 LBS. IN A WEEK BY

Experts Say...

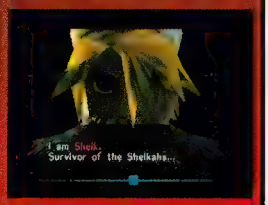
Huge, colossal, enormous, gargantuan, gigantic, immense, and...er, large—all words that can be used to describe the world of Hyrule and the areas to which it leads. Walking from one end of the land to another will burn some serious calories and take a significant length of time. Experts say you could "lose 50 lbs. in a week by wandering aimlessly if you're not careful and don't eat or drink anything while you're doing it."

But what better way to beat the bulge than by enjoying the rolling plains in the sunshine? Well, young Link discovered that when he traveled to the future, he could take the reins of a horse he met as a youngster in the castle stables and enjoy the relative comfort and time-saving advantages of galloping by horseback.

SURVIVOR OF THE SHEIKAHS PRESENTS MYSTERY

Who is the mysterious character aiding Link in his quest? Experts have been debating the significance of this curiously cowled character claiming to be "the survivor of the Sheikahs," who Link doesn't meet until traveling seven years into the future. "You can't even tell if it's a man or a woman," states Videogames.com expert James "Milkman" Mielke, "but there's a pretty good chance it's actually someone from Link's past." Observers Crispin Boyer and John Davison have two theories to present, but they've opted to keep their fat mouths shut so as to avoid revealing any spoilers.

Whoever this Sheik person is, it's sure to be revealed before Link reaches the end of his quest.



KOKIRI VILLAGE

Link's home where he discovers how his life is different from others around him and where he learns that "without a fairy you're not even a real man"—a lesson for life if ever there was one. After hooking up with renegade spritelet Navi though, our young hero is ready to meet his destiny to lead Hyrule. Wandering the village he unwittingly stumbles upon neighbors with an insatiable need to teach him things. Within an hour of wandering, Link is an accomplished gymnast, explorer and intellectual.

DEKU TREE

The apparent seat of all knowledge in Kokiri, Link is summoned to speak with the tree where he learns the basics of puzzles and combat. After some time inside the tree Link has pushed blocks, climbed walls, jumped over things, bounced up and down on boingy things, lit torches, set fire to stuff, jumped through holes, thrown switches and broken an awful lot of very breakable objets d'art.

HYRULE CASTLE

After seemingly killing a very old tree thanks to an unfortunate and unforeseen curse, Link travels to the castle where he discovers that all of the characters he encounters seem to suffer from some kind of obsessive-compulsive disorder. Shopkeepers, passers-by and unfortunate weirdos spend an awful lot of time repeatedly scratching and twitching. The castle is an idyllic location though, and is the residence of the young Princess Zelda who sends Link on his quest to locate the three spirit stones of the Triforce.

LOST WOODS

A famous location of the entire Zelda series, but you won't find much here. Lots of trees. Lots of music. Link somehow finds his way through the former by making use of the latter.

GORON CITY

Underground home of the sleepy, happy-faced Gorons who, for some reason, tend trees that bear bomb-fruit. Pluck the fruit, chuck the bomb, listen to and watch the big bang that ensues. It is here that our plucky hero and the gaggle of journalists tagging along with him discover that it is actually possible to waste *forever* by thinking you've understood the principles of a puzzle when actually you haven't. Somewhat embarrassed taggers-along John Davison, Crispin Boyer and Videogames.com's James Mielke admit, "Imagine the scenario...really big pot spinning around a large chamber with big walkway above it. You'd think, wouldn't you, that maybe you have to jump into the pot? Maybe there are some goodies in there. Seems perfectly logical." After enrolling the efforts of numerous other esteemed gameplaying gurus, though, the hapless team conceded defeat. "We had Dan Hsu, Shawn Smith

WANDERING AIMLESSLY!!!

Here are the places that plucky young Link traveled to in his first couple of days on his quest...

and even Andy Baran from *Expert Gamer* in here," admits a somewhat disheveled-looking John Davison, "and then Crispin discovers that you have to throw a bomb in there."

DODONGO'S CITY

Dodongo's a big fella, and the *Hyrule Tattler* is pleased to tell you that although he's an intimidating bully, young Link is able to make short work of him with the appropriate techniques. Lots of lava around here, and a good example of how important Link's compulsive jumping disorder can actually be.

JABU-JABU

The specifics of the scandal concerning Link's adventures inside giant fish-beast Jabu-Jabu can be read elsewhere in this issue of the *Tattler*. Needless to say, he's a lot bigger than he looks...and if you can imagine what being inside a fish is like, you've got an over-active imagination.

TEMPLE OF TIME

Link surprises us all by walking in, traveling seven years in the future and then yanking the Master Sword out of a dirty great big lump of rock. Having met the mysterious Sheik he discovers that Ganondorf has taken over the world and everything has gone very dark and scary outside.

And that's all the *Tattler* is prepared to divulge as yet. This only takes young Link less than a quarter of the way through his quest—so we don't want to spoil anything further for you!

ADVENTURER CATCHES FISH AS BIG AS HIM!

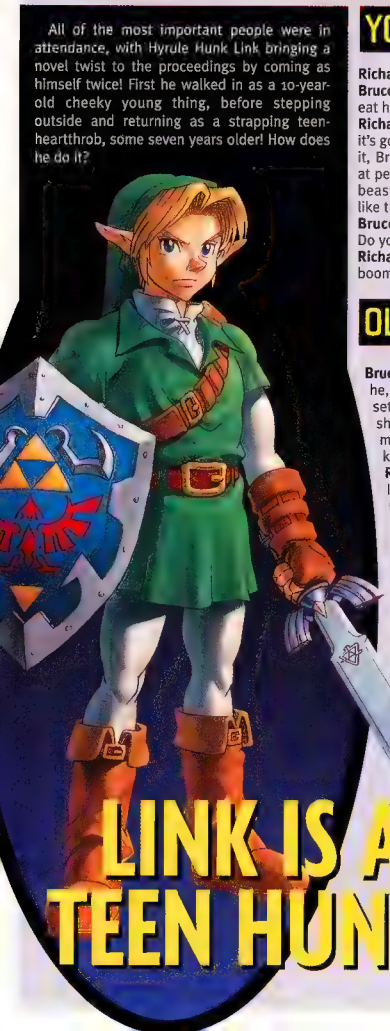
"Fishing is my way of life," says Link. When not roaming the lands, saving the world from Ganondorf's wicked plans, Link likes nothing better than kicking back at his favorite fishing hole with his pole, line and lure to help him relax. By some quirk of fate, his recent quest has led him to take advantage of his skills as it was necessary for him to catch the biggest fish in the lake to gain an item vital to his progress.

"It was incredible," says a close friend. "Link has always been an enthusiastic fisherman as a man and a boy, and discovering that a fully spec'd fishing challenge was part of his quest really made his day."

The *Tattler* has learned that Link enjoyed the fishing part of his quest so much, he actually spent far longer than was strictly necessary casting his line and feeling the realistic rumbling feedback that went along with the serene atmosphere.

FASHION POLICE

LET'S JOIN HYRULE'S FASHION FANATICS RICHARD FATLEROY AND BRUCE SUCHARD AS THEY TAKE A PEEK AT SOME OF THE AMAZING OUTFITS WORN AT THE SPECTACULAR GALA DEBUT OF THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME.



LINK IS A TEEN HUNK!

All of the most important people were in attendance, with Hyrule Hunk Link bringing a novel twist to the proceedings by coming as himself twice! First he walked in as a 10-year-old cheeky young thing, before stepping outside and returning as a strapping teen-heartthrob, some seven years older! How does he do it?

YOUNG LINK

Richard: That's a fine haircut for a young man.
Bruce: Oooh. He's so sweet. Couldn't you just eat him all up?
Richard: Um. No. That shield doesn't look like it's going to take a lot of punishment though does it, Bruce? You could bounce a few pebbles back at people, but he's not going to repel a ravenous beast's advances with a slab of hardboard like that.
Bruce: And that little sword...so teeny-tiny. Do you think he has any other little toys?
Richard: I'm sure he's left his catapult and his boomerang at home Bruce.

OLD LINK

Bruce: He really is an absolute dreamboat isn't he, Dickie? Those great knee-length boots really set off the whole ensemble don't they? Such a shame he didn't bring those butch-looking metal attachments he has for them...you know, the ones that let him walk underwater.
Richard: Yes Bruce. And don't call me Dickie. I really think the white pantyhose might be a mistake for a guy his age, though.
Bruce: You know, luvvie, I don't think it's pantyhose, by the looks of things that's a gorgeous all-in-one number he's got on under there. He's probably very snug in that, but there may be some personal hygiene issues when he goes on those long walks.
Richard: That's a damn big sword too. You can see why he didn't get to use it as a kid. You could do some damage with a weapon of that size. Such a shame he didn't bring his bow and arrow along too.
Bruce: Ooh, Dickie. Don't you believe it. And all the green, it works, but it's sooo, ooh, 1987 isn't it? Maybe he should have dug out his Zora tunic...you know, that lovely blue one.
Richard: Maybe Bruce. Maybe he just didn't want to spoil things for everyone by wearing some different clothing. I don't think anyone knew that he had an interchangeable wardrobe until you just blabbed it to everybody.

ZELDA

Bruce: She's a sweet young thing, Dickie. But is she wearing too much jewelry do you think?
Richard: I've told you before about this Dickie thing.
Bruce: But come on. The gold, the whole Triforce thing.
Richard: She's a sweet young thing, but she packs a powerful punch, Bruce. She's got a magical life ahead of her, but you've got to be concerned about a girl with ears that big.
Bruce: You know what they say about the size of a girl's ears, Dickie.
Richard: No. I'm not aware of that one.
Bruce: She likes her pink doesn't she? I wonder what she'll look like when she grows up?

GANONDORF

Bruce: Ooh my, he's a big boy. Do you think he works out?
Richard: He's got a football player's shoulders, that's for sure, Bruce, but do you think he may be trying too hard to assert his masculinity with

all the spikes?

Bruce: They are a bit much aren't they, luvvie-cakes? But he's not an attractive boy is he? He should really consider giving, you know, a bit of a pluck to those eyebrows. What do you think?

Richard: I think you're right Bruce. And only a supremely evil overlord would ever consider the forehead adornment thing. It's a little too '80s glam, don't you think? He may plunge the world into darkness by taking control of the Triforce, but do you think the pastel aztec patterns really go that well with brown leather?

Bruce: Certainly not, my sweet. Now, Dickie-poos, you didn't know the ears thing. But this one's got a mighty big nose—and I'm sure you know what they say about boys with big noses. And feet for that matter, Dickie.

Richard: I do, Bruce. But that doesn't appear to be something Ganon is concerned about.

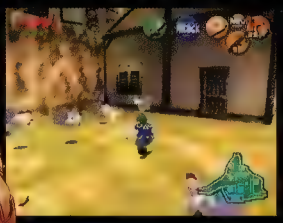
HYRULE HERO NEARLY PECKED TO PIECES IN VICIOUS CHICKEN ATTACK

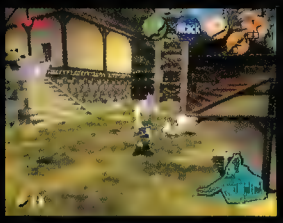
Tunic-clad adventurer Link was crying fowl yesterday after a gaggle of ill-tempered chickens allegedly attacked the 10-year-old Kokiri Village resident.

"I was just minding my own business," Link told the *Tattler*, "when suddenly these beastly featherheads began pecking at my parts. I barely managed to duck inside a house before the critters could tear me to bits."

After further prodding, Link admitted that he may have initiated the encounter when he "accidentally" conked one of the egg-laying gobblers on the head. "Quite frankly, the entire ordeal seems a bit familiar," Link later admitted. "I could've sworn I've been attacked by chickens in another lifetime, on another console—a 16-Bit system, to be precise."

We're not really sure what Link was talking about, but we do hope the boy learned a lesson here. After all, Hyrule's chicken population does factor into several puzzles. It's even rumored that youngsters can actually grip the creatures by the feet and use them to glide to distant platforms...





GIANT FISH EATS PRINCESS, AS LINK IS CAUGHT IN BIZARRE LOVE TRIANGLE

Giant beast Jabu-Jabu is the fishy fiend responsible for the disappearance of Princess Ruto. Adventurer and ubiquitous star of a number of top-selling videogames, Link has exclusively informed the *Hyrule Tattler* of his amazing discovery. "I jumped inside his mouth, and found myself in an environment that seemed to be far larger than the fish actually looked," Link enthused. "It was also a lot larger than that Clanker thing in Banjo-Kazooie," he added, clearly displaying a tremendous level of Nintendo product knowledge. Videogame journalists John Davison and Crispin Boyer were also along for the ride. "The insides of Jabu-Jabu really are disgusting," claims Boyer. "The walls are pulsating all the time, the floor is always ankle deep in water, and the doors open like giant sphincters."

Davison continues, "Once inside his guts, Link had to travel through a number of gooey and revolting-looking chambers before eventually finding Ruto. Then, once he'd found her he discovered that she hangs around in there by choice some of the time, but had become stuck. Once Link got to her, she refused to move and made him carry her on her shoulders. After running around like a mad thing, and fighting this loony Boss that shot electricity out of its tentacles, the crazy woman insisted that Link had to marry her."

It transpires that marriage wasn't what Link had on his mind, and we've since learned that he is avoiding the Princess by manipulating the passage of time with an Ocarina given to him by his "other woman," the Princess Zelda.

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good is good, but so is generosity.
because in this life, and the next,
what goes around,
comes around.

if you
choose
not to give
to your
friends,
you may
have to
give up your
friends.

if you
choose
not to give to your
friends,
you will
remain little
novice
your friends
always said
you are.

if you
choose
not to accept
the characters
that others have
created,
you will learn
nothing,
remain stagnant,
and die
an early,
painful
death.

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Nintendo 64

TATTLER STAFF STYMIED BY 40-FOOT BOTTLE...

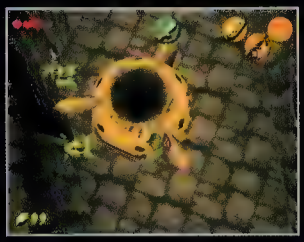
...and Other Puzzles that Litter Link's Homeland

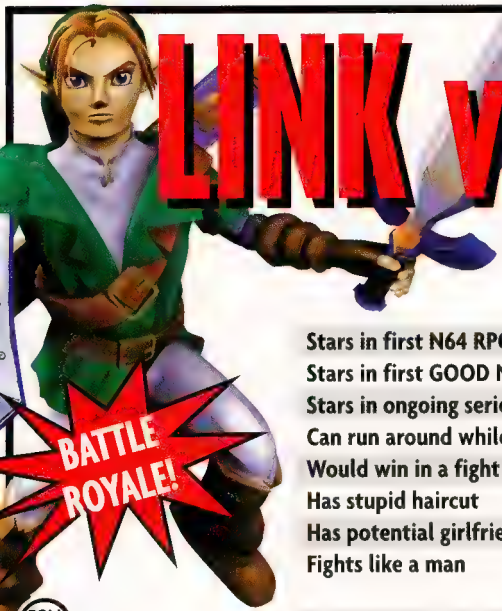
It's the giant spinning bottle in Goron City that best represents the new style of puzzles in Zelda 64. The *Hyrule Tattler* crew tried leaping into it. That didn't work. We tried cracking it open with young Link's little sword. That didn't work, either. In the end, it took a little bomb-tossing handiwork to crack this particular enigma.

And that was one of the easiest of the Banjo-Kazooie/Mario 64-style puzzles Link must contend with during his adventure. Our own dungeon meanderings uncovered numerous instances where Link will have to jump chasms, scale walls and crawl across narrow ledges to reach higher platforms and items. We also stumbled across minigames aplenty, such as the already mentioned fishing game and a feet-first plunge from a waterfall to gather scattered underwater rupees within a limited amount of time. Then there are the five masks Link can wear to interact with the odd stones he'll find in the countryside, as well as elicit different responses from townspeople.

Of course, many of the puzzles are of the standard Zelda-series variety, as well. We watched young Link shoot switches with his sling shot to open doors, push and pull blocks onto switches, light torches to unlock secret areas and bomb funny-colored wall panels to access hidden rooms. Sure, the massive dungeon environments—which still manage to maintain their room-by-room setup—can make things messy sometimes. More than once we saw Link accidentally dowse his flaming stick in an underground river on his way to light one of the torches. But here's the real rub: Even at the game's outset, young Link will be unable to solve certain puzzles until he revisits that location as older Link. Expect to backtrack a lot if you wanna find everything.

Yet as many puzzles as Link encounters, that's nothing compared to the sheer amount of secrets in the game. Whether it's rupees stashed above the Hyrule Castle drawbridge or hearts scattered among the weeds, secret things are everywhere. Although Link won't get much help finding them early on, he'll later stumble across an item that makes secret stuff stand out. This item works with your Rumble Pak, making the thing vibrate when you approach hidden items. Find this handy tool and every secret in Hyrule is yours for the grabbing.





LINK vs. BRIAN

As if he didn't have enough to worry about, Kokiri Village Resident Link recently found himself going toe to toe with out-of-towner Brian, star of Quest 64. Who came out on top? See the results below...

	Link	Brian
Stars in first N64 RPG		X
Stars in first GOOD N64 RPG	X	
Stars in ongoing series of games	X	
Can run around while fighting	X	X
Would win in a fight	X	
Has stupid haircut		X
Has potential girlfriend	X	
Fights like a man	X	
And the winner is...	Link	

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He's charmed young and old alike with his exquisite fingerwork and gentle melodies. Now Link—the sometimes young, sometimes old hero of Hyrule—has recorded his most memorable Ocarina tunes on one treasured collection. From Octorok 'n' Roll Records comes *Link: Master of the Ocarina*, the must-own album that'll send your heart soaring with its 12 magical hits. You get the classic *Up, Left, Up, Left*, which when keyed in with the Camera Buttons turns night into day. Then there's the *Tune of Time*, an enchanting number that'll make you feel like a teenager again. And who can forget *Zelda's Lullaby*, the multipurpose tune handy for weddings, barmitzvahs and stopping waterfalls so you can enter the dungeons behind them.

Buy the album, learn its tunes, enter them on your joypad, use their magic to help save the world—or just crank this sucker up at parties. After all, as Videogames.com's James Mielke says, "You can bust this thing out any time you like and just start jammin'. Yeah."

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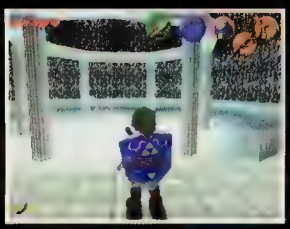


Poured straight from the cool, spring-fed fountains of Hyrule's fairy population, Fairy Fountain Bottled Water is a life-giving liquid guaranteed to recharge your Heart Meter after a rough day of adventuring. Come visit our fountains—if you can find them—anytime you need a quick pick-me-up. And be sure to bring along a bottle, fill 'er up, and take our all-healing concoction on the road. It just may save your life.

GUARANTEED 99.99 PERCENT PURE

RUMOR OF ZELDA 64'S BREVITY APPEAR GREATLY EXAGGERATED

A 10-HOUR GAME? SIXTY HOURS IS MORE LIKE IT

Hyrule forefather Shigeru Miyamoto spawned his own bad press months ago, when he offhandedly remarked that Nintendo testers could topple Ganondorf in under a dozen hours. Internet junkies jumped on the story, and soon rumor was buzzing around the kingdom that Zelda 64 would be a disappointingly short game.

Fear not. Although it's doubtful the game packs the 75-hour quest claimed by Nintendo PR, we expect Zelda 64 to last at least 50 hours, longer even than Final Fantasy VII. After all, *Hyrule Tattler* reporters John Davison and Crispin Boyer spent two entire days with the game—and didn't even see a third of it. That was with us rushing through the quest, with full cheats turned on, so we never worried about dying. But perhaps one nervous comment from *Expert Gamer* strategist Andy Baran best sums up Zelda 64's epic gameplay experience. "How am I going to do a strategy guide on this?" Baron asked. "This is seven times larger than Banjo. What if I miss something in a cave somewhere or miss one of the bombable walls?"

Part of what makes playing the game such a massive undertaking is the sheer number of miniquests Link must complete over the course of his adventure. At any given time, he'll have to track down three Spirit Stones, collect skull tokens from dead spiders, recover six masks, find the Great Fairy fountains to learn new magic attacks, rescue the fish king's daughter, unravel the mystery behind Sheik—not to mention recover the Triforce and save Hyrule from Ganondorf. And we haven't even touched upon all the little tasks villagers goad Link into doing (or the fishing (like that's nearly a complete game in itself).

Then there's the size of Hyrule itself. As anyone who's hiked from Death Mountain to Jabu-Jabu knows, our kingdom isn't exactly a tiny piece of real estate. Cripes, you can spend weeks in the Lost Woods if you don't know where you're going. And that's not including the miles of dungeons and caves that snake below Hyrule's fields, forests and deserts. Let's not forget that Link has to cross much of this terrain not once but twice—once as a child, then again seven years later. Our guy in green will have put a lot of miles on his boots by the time he reaches the final battle.

Of course, one of the big questions now among long-time Link fanatics is whether Zelda 64 will pack a second, length-doubling quest along the same lines of the original NES game. Well, all indicators point to no.

JOYPAD MYSTERY:

How Does Link Jump without a Jump Button?

Auto-jump, the lock-on button, context-sensitive commands—yes, Hyrule forefather Shigeru Miyamoto hit the ol' drawing board pretty hard when he redesigned Zelda 64's control system, the most innovative joypad scheme the *Tattler* has ever seen applied to Hyrule citizenry.

For starters, many of Link's commands vary depending on the situation. Approach a narrow tunnel, for instance, and the A button switches from its standard attack function to a specific duck-down-and-enter-tunnel command. Or say

Link stands beside a stone block. The A button converts to the grab command and lets Link tug or push the block—or even climb atop it.

SHOCKING REVELATION!

And no doubt you've heard all about the "attention button" by now. Taps of the Z Trigger cycle the focus of Link's attention between enemies, characters, objects, chickens, whatever, in his immediate vicinity. Stab at the Z while surrounded by enemies, for instance, and Link will always face one of the baddies until it's either slain or you tap the Z again. Never before has it been so easy for Hyrule residents to see what they're fighting.

Additional combat commands open once you've locked on. Swing crazy with the analog stick and Link busts out Lara Croft-style gymnastics, including backflips and side leaps. Mix analog combos with the Attack button, and Link changes up his attacks, too, between vertical and horizontal sword slashes. The Right Shoulder button, meanwhile, whips out Link's shield, provided he has one of the three in the game. While cowering behind the wooden shield, Link can aim it up, down and from side to side—a great tactic for deflecting spitballs back at Octoroks. And, of course, Link still packs his famous charge-up wallop, as well. Hold the Attack button for a few seconds (you can feel the charge build up in the Rumble Pak), then release it to watch Link spin his blazing sword in a lethal 360-degree swipe. Gone, however, is Link's ability to shoot swords when his heart containers are maxed out (although he may learn that attack late in the game, as he did in the Game Boy Zelda).

Using the Z-trigger to focus Link's attention also frees the Camera buttons for an especially handy task. You can assign any weapon or item in Link's inventory to either the Left, Right or Down Camera button. Say you're in a spider-infested area where you'll use the slingshot and hookshot frequently. Simply assign the Left and Down Camera buttons to those weapons, then let rip. Assign the Ocarina to the Right Camera button, and you can wield three items at once, while still being able to swing your sword and whip out your shield.

But here's the really surprising thing: Although every button on the joypad is used for something, none of 'em makes Link jump; the little guy takes care of that himself. Step off a ledge and Link makes the appropriate last-minute leap into the air. The slower you approach an edge, the weaker Link's jump, to the point where he'll just hang from a ledge. Likewise, if Link walks to a steep step or platform he can reach with his hands, he'll clamber up automatically. Not only is this auto-jump/climb feature convenient, it's a frequent lifesaver, since it launches Link over chasms

you may not see until the last minute.

Now, if all this talk of attention buttons and context-sensitive commands has you a bit intimidated, don't worry—the game's very beginning, in Kokiri Village, serves as a training course of sorts. Here, you'll learn every button function and even get rewarded with Rupees when you learn certain new tricks. The *Hyrule Tattler* applauds Kokiri's excellent physical-education program. After all, when the land is being assaulted from all sides by spidery tektites, ghostly ghinis and every other netherworldly bad boy, our kids need to be prepared for anything (even if the chances of one child growing up to save Hyrule are extremely unlikely).

ZELDA 101:

The Tattler Looks Back at 11 Years of Link

BONUS SECTION

It was like a gift from the gaming gods or something. Encased in a shiny, metallic-gold cartridge, the Legend of Zelda descended from the heavens onto the NES scene in 1987. The first of a new genre—the action RPG—Zelda took the gaming world by storm with its huge world, vast dungeons and enchanting gameplay. A landmark in game design, Shigeru Miyamoto's masterpiece has gone on to become one of the most popular franchises in videogame history, with four fantastic sequels and a place in the heart of anyone who considers him or herself to be a true fan of gaming. Here then, is a brief history of the series that's captivated so many millions of gamers around the world for the last 11 years.

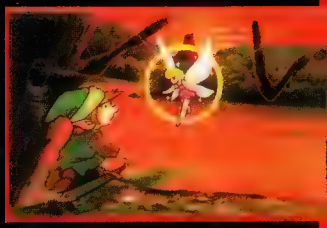
The Legend of Zelda

NES, 1987 –SOURCES SAY

The original Zelda was riddled with innovations. Not only was it the first RPG-style game for the NES in America, but it was also the first game to feature a battery for backing up your progress. Its fancy gold packaging (with the cardboard cut-out so you could actually see the gold cartridge) was decidedly different from all other NES games at the time, and it even included a miniature "hint book" (it was actually a foldout miniposter that included a partially complete world map, some tips and monster profiles, and maps of the first six dungeons). Zelda went on to become Nintendo's first-ever million-selling game in the United States (a feat which took many months back then—coincidentally, we expect sales of Zelda 64 to surpass 1 million units literally within hours of its release).

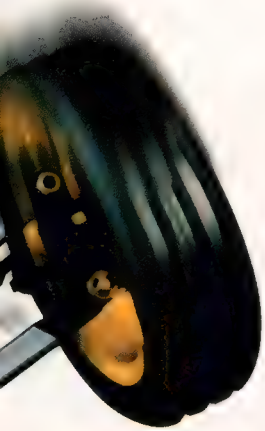
THE STORY

In a small kingdom in the land of Hyrule, an army led by Ganon, the Prince of Darkness, attacks the peaceful land and steals the Triforce of Power, a golden triangle possessing mystical powers. Fearing his



FINALLY, NOT EVEN

A REMOTE CONTROL CAR YOUR BROTHER CAN BREAK.



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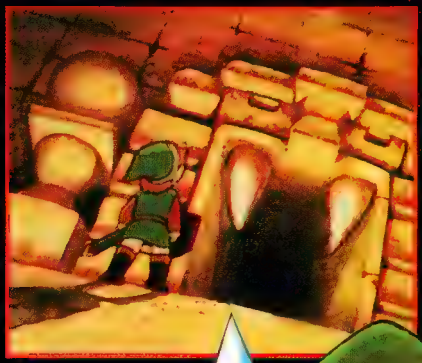
wicked rule, Zelda, the princess of the land, divides the remaining Triforce (the Triforce of Wisdom) into eight fragments and hides them in dungeons across the land. She then sends her nursemaid, Impa, to find someone with enough courage to destroy Ganon and retrieve the Triforce. Angered, Ganon imprisons the Princess and sends out a search party to find Impa. Impa gets caught, and just as she's about to be axed by Ganon's henchmen, a young lad appears, drives off Ganon's men and saves Impa. His name is Link, and the rest, as they say, is history.

THE OUTCOME

After making his way through two quests with nine grueling dungeons in each, Link finally finds and defeats Ganon, deep within his lair in Death Mountain. The Princess is saved, the Triforce is recovered and Hyrule is safe again. For now...



The Japanese Version

Original Title: The Hyrule Fantasy: Zelda No Densetsu ("The Hyrule Fantasy: The Legend of Zelda")

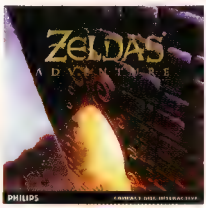
Japan Release Date: Feb. 21, 1986 (Disk), Feb. 19, 1994 (Cartridge)

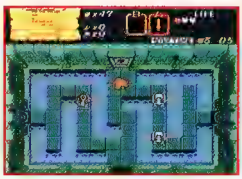
In Japan, Zelda was originally released for the Famicom Disk System, the disk-based Famicom (NES) add-on that was never released in the United States. There were minor differences between this version and the U.S. version, such as the main font (it was a little bit thinner—you can see it on the screenshots on the back of the U.S. version's packaging), and some different sound effects (most notably the sound of Link's sword being thrown when his hearts are full). Also, the "Magic Book" from the U.S. version is known as "Bible" in the original disk game. Years later, Nintendo decided to finally release Zelda on cartridge in Japan (this was basically just the U.S. version translated into Japanese). Originally slated to be released in 1992 (it was even mass produced), Nintendo delayed its release until February of 1994 to coincide with the launch of the redesigned Famicom.

ZELDA ODDITIES:

Two Games Link Wants You to Forget... ...And Two He Wishes You'd Seen

So what about the "other" Zelda games out there that never made it big in the States? There were two interactive Zelda adventures released for the CD-i several years ago (they both sucked), and then there were two totally cool Zelda games that were released only in Japan on Nintendo's Satellaview service for the Super Famicom—BS Legend of Zelda and BS Zelda: Ancient Stone Panel. The first one was a 16-Bit Mario All-Stars-like remake of the first Zelda, with all new dungeons and secrets, while the second was a special timed version of SFC Zelda, with a feature called "Sound Link," where players competed in real time against each other with guidance from a live voice.

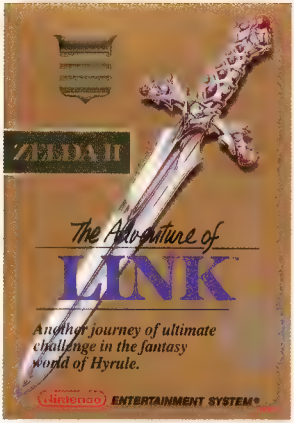




The two CD-i Zelda games featured laughably bad animation, totally boring, uninteractive gameplay and cheesy sounds. Perhaps it was garbage like this that made Nintendo so weary of going with the CD format.

Zelda II: The Adventure of Link

NES, 1988 -SCIENTISTS PREDICT


ZELDA II
The Adventure of
LINK
Another journey of ultimate challenge in the fantasy world of Hyrule.
Nintendo ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

After countless delays because of "chip shortages" (this was Nintendo's PR line and not necessarily the truth), Zelda II was finally released at the end of 1988. Even though it was a fantastic game (and a damn popular one too), it didn't sit well with some critics because of its decidedly different look when compared to the first Zelda. The overworld was much larger, but encounters with enemies led to side-scrolling battle scenes that took the place of the "on-the-spot" battles from the original. Town scenes and dungeons were also side-scrolling (the dungeons were magnificently designed), and Link now had the ability to jump and use magic. Similar to an RPG, Link gained experience from defeating enemies, which allowed him to level-up his Life, Magic and Attack abilities.

THE STORY

Zelda II takes place several years after the original Zelda. A sleeping spell has been cast on Princess Zelda as a result of her refusing to reveal information about the Triforce to an evil magician. In order to free her from this spell, Link must place crystals in the foreheads of statues in six palaces throughout Hyrule. Doing so opens the path to the Great Palace, where the Triforce of Courage is hidden (the Triforce is the key to breaking Zelda's spell). Meanwhile, Ganon's underlings are beginning to work toward the revival of Ganon, which can only occur by first sacrificing his killer (Link) and then sprinkling Link's blood on his ashes. Pretty gruesome for a Nintendo-made game, eh?

THE OUTCOME

After placing the crystals in all six palaces, Link heads to the Great Palace to take on the final Guardian and retrieve the Triforce of Courage. After defeating the Guardian, Link goes face to face with a shocking end Boss—his own dark side—in an attempt to purify himself and claim the Triforce. After winning, he reunites the three Triforces (Power, Wisdom and Courage) and awakens Princess Zelda.

The Japanese Version

Original Title: The Legend of Zelda 2: Rinku No Bouken ("The Legend of Zelda 2: Link's Adventure")

Japan Release Date: Jan. 14, 1987 (Disk)

The Japanese version of Zelda II was released almost two years before the U.S. version. Again, there were some minor differences between the two versions, but for the most part it was the exact same game. Some of the music was different (better in the U.S. version), the enemies and the overworld map looked worse, there was less animation in certain parts (for example, Link never held up items when he got them in the Japanese version), and of course, since it was a Disk game there were access pauses (can you imagine an NES game with loading? Yeesh!).

The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past

Super NES, 1992 –ASTROLOGER MUSES

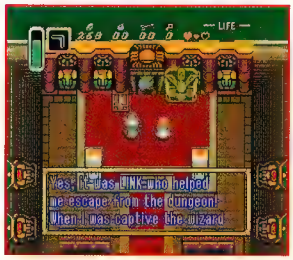
A Link to the Past had two things going for it that made Zelda fans extremely happy: First, it was on the Super NES, which meant it would be both bigger and better-looking than any Zelda game before it. Second, it brought the series back to its roots, ditching Zelda II's side-scrolling/RPG-like feel in favor of the more welcomed overhead action-RPG style of the original Zelda. Not only was the game tremendous in size and scope, but the gameplay was totally fantastic. Not surprising in the least, Zelda: A Link to the Past was the highest-rated Super NES game of all time (at #3 overall) according to *EGM*'s Top 100 list in issue #100.

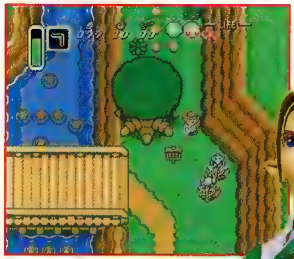
THE STORY

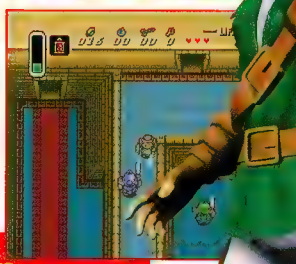
As you may have inferred from the game's title, Super NES Zelda actually takes place BEFORE Zelda I and II—about 100 years before, to be exact. Asleep in his home one night during a fierce thunderstorm, Link hears the voice of Princess Zelda in his dreams, begging for him to come rescue her from a cell in the depths of Hyrule Castle. He wakes to find his uncle gearing up for battle. Before he leaves, his uncle commands him to stay home and wait for his return. After waiting about 10 seconds (so he's a little impatient), Link heads out to the castle in search of his uncle and the Princess. After rescuing her (and finding his uncle slain), he learns about an evil wizard named Agahnim, who, in seeking to unlock the secrets of the Golden Land, has kidnapped seven maidens who are descendants of the wise men who sealed off the Golden Land ages ago.

THE OUTCOME

After traveling through both the normal and dark worlds of Hyrule, Link finds out that the evil Ganondorf (Ganon) was behind everything, and heads to face him within the Great Pyramid in the Dark World. He defeats him, winning back the Triforce and ultimately restoring the Dark World to its once glorious state.







The Japanese Version

Original Title: Super Famicom Zelda No Densetsu: Kamigami No Triforce ("Super Famicom The Legend of Zelda: Triforce of the Gods")

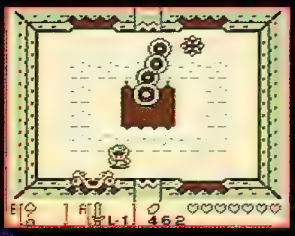
Japan Release Date: Nov. 21, 1991

The Super Famicom version of Zelda is actually exactly the same as the U.S. one, only with Japanese text (duh!). Interestingly enough, it was released on Nov. 21, 1991 exactly seven years (to the date) before Zelda 64 is set to be released in Japan (Nov. 21, 1998).

The Legend of Zelda: Link's Awakening

Game Boy, 1993 –NASA CONTENDS

Link's Awakening is widely considered to be one of the best (if not the best) Game Boy games ever released. For a Game Boy game, the quest was huge, with eight intricately designed dungeons and a vast overworld. While the action was overhead and the graphical style was similar to A Link to the Past, the entire world (including the dungeons) was split up one screen at a time, similar to the first Zelda. If you haven't played this one yet, don't go running out to buy it just yet. Nintendo is working on an



updated color version of the game to be released for the Game Boy Color, so you might as well just wait for that and play it in full color.

THE STORY

The hero of Link's Awakening is actually the same Link from A Link to the Past. In other words, this one takes place about 100 years before the NES Zelda games, too. After Ganon was defeated in A Link to the Past, peace returned to Hyrule and all was well. Being the restless adventurer that we all know him to be, Link decided to hop on a boat and take a cruise into the unknown on a quest for enlightenment. Unfortunately, on the way back he ran into a fierce storm, and his ship was torn to pieces. Next thing he knew, he was on an island called Koholint, which was overshadowed by a giant egg atop the island's central mountain. A strange owl explained to him that if he wanted to get home, he'd have to awaken the Wind Fish that slept in the giant egg. Surely he had no idea of the huge adventure about to unfold...

THE OUTCOME

Link made his way through eight grueling dungeons, collecting eight musical instruments that were required in order to wake the Wind Fish. Finally, atop the huge mountain, he played the Ballad of the Wind Fish and woke the sleeping giant. After doing so, he learned the secret of the Wind Fish, and before long he found himself back in the ocean, hanging on to remnants of his smashed ship, drifting calmly toward the shores of Hyrule. Was it really all a dream? You'll have to finish the game yourself to find out. We're not gonna spoil it for you.

The Japanese Version

Original Title: Zelda No Densetsu: Yume wo Miru Shima ("The Legend of Zelda: Dreaming Island")

Japan Release Date: June 6, 1993

The Japanese version of the Zelda is, like the SNES version, identical to its U.S. counterpart. However, the upcoming remake for the Game Boy Color is actually going to be enhanced in several ways. We don't have all the details yet, but so far we know that Link will have different-colored clothes, instead of just green. There will be differing effects with each outfit color (it may be just armor, or it could be more...we're not sure yet). Some dungeons and monsters may be enhanced as well, and there will be an entirely new dungeon, too (yes!). We also know that you'll be able to take pictures in the game, and then print them out using the Game Boy Printer. Neat, huh?

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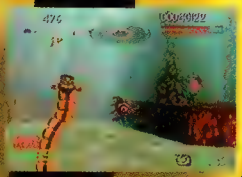
Buck Bumble



BEE PREPARED

POWER

TOOLS

Peripheral Reviews

Jolt Pad

by: Innovation
for: PlayStation
price: $24.99

5.0

Transparent blue joypad with exact same configuration as standard Dual Shock. Doesn't feel as solid as Sony's pad though, and the buttons feel horrible.

www.innovation1.com

silver buttons look painted and feel really cheap and nasty.

Cooling Station

by: Nuby
for: PlayStation
price: $29.99

5.0

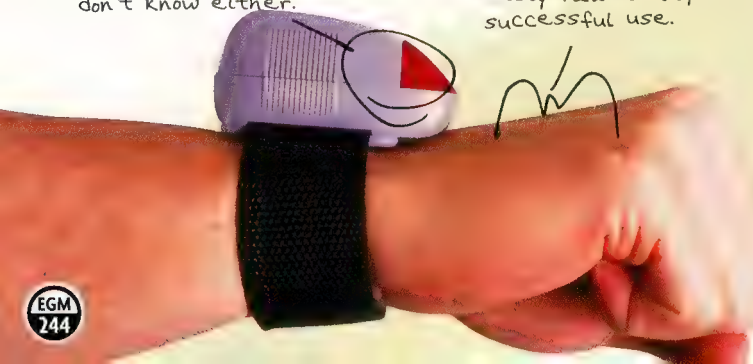
It's a fan in a big ugly box that you put under your PlayStation. Granted it cools down your system but unless you leave yours on all day (like us)...do you really need one?

www.nubyonline.com

memory card holder? Hmm... hardly. It is a little drawer though. Handyish.

Yes, that is a flashing red light on the front. why? we don't know either.

Meaty Paw is key to successful use.



Shock Pak

by: Innovation
for: PlayStation
price: $24.99

1.0

Quite why you'd want a strap-on, vibro, fun buzzer is beyond us but it all seems a bit redundant when you can just buy a Dual Shock Pad. You can have some fun with it though. :)

www.innovation1.com

Lara Memory Card

by: InterAct
for: PlayStation
price: $19.99

6.0

With 15 save-blocks this runs like a normal memory card, but also comes with a distinctly chubby-looking Lara Croft stuck to the end. You've got to be a real fan to appreciate this.

www.interact-acc.com

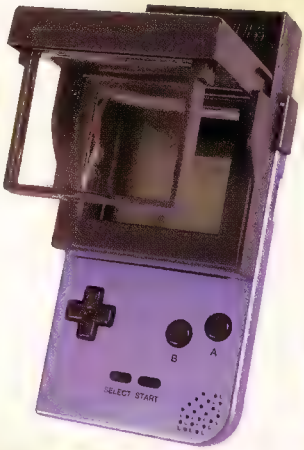
Game Light Plus

by:Nuby
for: Game Boy
price: $9.95

6.0

The return of the ridiculous GB add-ons. Lens+light+GB=cumbersome. If you want to play in the dark or something it's kinda cool—but it's very awkward. It's dirt-cheap though.

www.nubyonline.com



N64 Extension Cable

by: Innovation
for: N64
price: $9.99

9.0

Well...it works. As extension cables go—well, this is a cable, and it extends your, um, cable. And it has all the requisite plugs and stuff. Available in eight colors, including clear.

www.innovation1.com

Extreme Green Pad

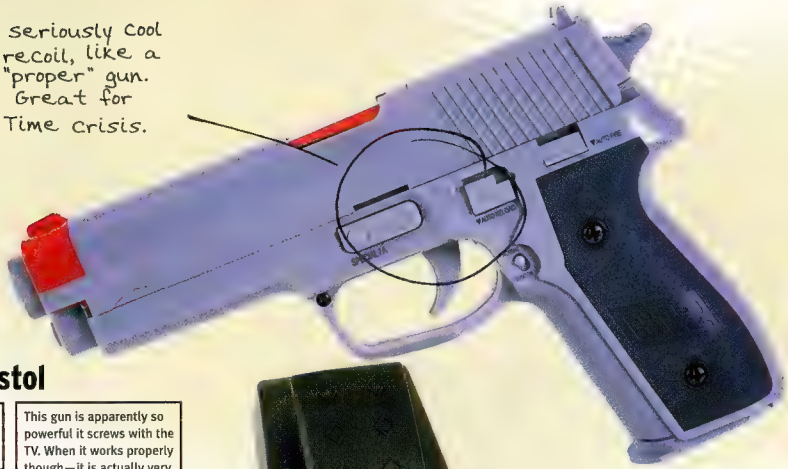
by: Nintendo
for: N64
price: $29.99

9.0

It's a standard N64 pad (which is still the best) but it's a funky see-through, day-glow green. What more could you want? The finest pad around with a groovy new look.

Only available in Toys 'R' Us stores.

www.nintendo.com
www.toysrus.com



Virtual Pistol

by: Game Source
for: PlayStation
price: $59.99

7.5

This gun is apparently so powerful it screws with the TV. When it works properly though—it is actually very cool. That recoil is severe, even if it does need a power supply.

Virtual Gun

by: Nuby
for: PlayStation & Saturn
price: $34.95

6.5

Not GunCon-compatible, clunky and top-heavy, but it feels nice if you use it two-handed, thanks to that meaty barrel section.

www.nubyonline.com

Dual Shock Gun

by: Innovation
for: PlayStation & Saturn
price: $44.99

3.0

Cheap and dubious design with dodgy balance. Although it claims to be GunCon-compatible we had some big problems with it. The feedback is a seriously ungun-like buzz.

www.innovation1.com

Not very well-balanced. It's extremely front-heavy and uncomfortable.

Plasticky and cheap feel plus the dual system compatibility makes button placement a bit odd.

Maybe looks a little too real for comfort!

Really solid-feeling trigger. Easy to fire quickly.

Scorpion

by: Blaze/Innovation
for: PlayStation & Saturn
price: $35.00

9.5

We asked a cop about how realistic this gun was, and he said if he saw someone with it, he'd shoot them. Still, it's an easy-to-aim gun. Much more comfortable than most.

www.innovation1.com

Force feedback is a slightly irritation buzz that can be easily turned off.

Very lightweight and cheap-feeling.

GunZ

by: ACT LABS
for: PlayStation
price: $14.99

6.0

Futuristic look with a cheap, dumpy feel. GunZ has decent button placement and is balanced nicely, but lack of GunCon support is the deciding factor. It is cheap though.

www.actlab.com

GRUDGE MATCH

WCW/nWo Revenge

Review Crew Scores: 7.5 8.5 8.5 8.0

Presentation	Sound	Customization	Characters
Revenge pins down the flash and presentation of TV wrestling, with real WCW venues, well-animated wrestler intros, better crowd and ring graphics–not to mention sharper and more colorful visuals overall. It's got the real TV feel.	Both games hold their own here. Revenge has great crowd noises but no play-by-play, although you won't miss it.	You're limited to choosing one of the existing wrestlers and changing his name and costume (by picking from the game's many outfits). You can swap colors, too.	Here's where Revenge stands out. It packs 50 licensed wrestlers, including the guys from Raven's Flock, nWo White and Red, all the independents, plus the extra Japanese characters for a total of 70-plus in all. And if you want more, you can use the limited Custom Wrestler Mode.

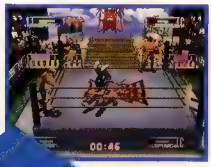
WWF War Zone

Review Crew Scores: 7.5 8.0 8.5 8.0

Presentation	Sound	Customization	Characters
War Zone looks good, but its dark graphics and drab backgrounds make it more of a fightweight when compared to Revenge.	You get real audience chants, play-by-play and the genuine theme tunes for each of the wrestlers. Sometimes, it's too quiet.	War Zone body slams Revenge here. Its create-a-player feature lets you build a wrestler from the head down. You can customize his (or her, if you unlock the gender option) body shape, hair and skin color, every part of his outfit, stats such as speed and strength, moves list, theme music–even his status as a good guy or bad guy. Build your own army.	You only get 18 licensed characters (plus secrets like the ring girl). Still, Create-a-Player lets you build an unlimited roster.

It's a close call, but Revenge has the wrestlers, graphics and party-game feel to put it on top. If it only had War Zone's Create-a-Wrestler Mode, Revenge would be perfect.

What happens when two similar games climb into *EGM*'s ring for a face-to-face showdown? Only one walks away the winner.



Coolness

The WCW/nWo wrestlers are cool, sure—especially if you can keep track of all of 'em and their factions. And they are more popular than the WWF crew by a narrow margin. But we prefer the WWF's over-the-top antics.

Moves

Gameplay here is pretty basic, in that all the wrestlers share the same move commands. But that's not a bad thing, since it makes Revenge the better party game. Rookies can hop in the ring and start slammin' away from the get-go. Control is top-notch, although it's just as good in War Zone.

Play Modes

Revenge may have more real venues, but it doesn't have quite as many modes of play. You get the basics, plus Battle Royal, and weapons in every mode. Still, all the important modes are here.

Bret Hart?

WCW Champ Goldberg Says...

"When I look at War Zone, I see 16 puny wrestlers. When I look at WCW/nWo Revenge, I see me and the toughest competition anyone's ever faced in the history of professional wrestling. Which leads me to one question, Who's Next?!"

Elephant Sak Says...

"Yeah, Revenge may have more real wrestlers, but then it doesn't have me and the unlimited amount of other kick ass custom tough guys you can build in War Zone's Create-a-Wrestler Mode. We eat real wrestlers for breakfast!"

Custom wrestler Elephant Sak created by Shawn Smith as real WWF wrestlers were unable to be reached for comment.

The Winner Is... WCW/nWo Revenge

Experience the rush of full-throttle 3D off-road racing as never before with ten all new, fully-customizable rally cars and trucks, eight extreme courses, killer sounds from Guttermouth, Wick and One Hit Wonder, plus complete compatibility with the Dual Shock™ Analog Controller. Create your own off-road experience or edit an existing course with the revolutionary Rally Cross 2 track editor. Think you own the road? You may be right.

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PlayStation

IDOL MINDS

989 STUDIOS

DO IT IN THE DIRT.

www.989studios.com

Review Crew

Platinum Awards go to games that get four 10s, the best possible review a game can get.

Gold Awards go to games whose average score equals 9.0 or higher.

Games that average at least an 8.0 receive Silver Awards.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

EGM rates games based on how they compare to other titles on the same system. The highest score we'll give a game is a 10. When a game receives a 10, you can rest assured it's one of the best games ever made—a revolutionary title that truly stands above everything else in its genre for its time. At the other end of the spectrum sits the lowest score a game can receive: a 1.0. This is the kind of game you want to avoid at all costs. It's pure crap, as our scale (above) explains.

In the middle lies the average grade, 5.0. We repeat: 5.0 IS AN AVERAGE GRADE. Simple, ain't it?

Crispin Boyer

Current Favorites
Metal Gear Solid
Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Xenogears
MediEvil

Favorite Genres:
RPGs, Action

Crispin doesn't get all the gripes about Metal Gear Solid being too short and easy. It took him nearly 15 hours to beat the game the first time through, and then he wanted to play it again to see the second ending...and then again to mess with the secrets...and then again to review the twisted story. Plus, how could he dis a game in which one of the female characters gives a real-life massage?

John Davison

In a month where there have been some truly spectacular games in the *EGM* office, John has been getting increasingly exasperated at the truckloads of crappy games that seem to be turning up to go along with them. Screams of "how can they possibly think people would play anything so $&^#???," interspersed with loud and undeniably English swear words, were frequently heard booming from his office.

Current Favorites
Metal Gear Solid
Xenogears
Pokémon
Zelda: Ocarina of Time

Favorite Genres:
Action, Adventure

Dean Hager

Current Favorites
NCAA Football 99
NFL GameDay 99
Top Gear Overdrive
Madden NFL 99 (PS)

Favorite Genres:
Sports, Racing

It's been insane around here since the monstrous holiday game rush began. If Dean isn't playing games at work or home, he's dreaming about them. The only problem is, some of the games he's had to review this month have been giving him real bad nightmares. Hopefully next month some nice new games will extinguish those terrors and replace them with sweet, peaceful dreams.

Dan Hsu

Has working on *EGM's 1999 Video Game Buyer's Guide* (on sale mid-November) driven Shoe insane? Nintendo recently visited us with the latest copy of Zelda for the N64. Shoe purposely avoided any and all contact with the game. "I don't want any of Zelda spoiled for me!," he says. Umm...Shoe, we hate to tell you this, but it's part of your job to check out these games before they get released...

Current Favorites
Metal Gear Solid
Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus
Devil Dice

Favorite Genres:
Strategy, Puzzle

John Ricciardi

Current Favorites
Metal Gear Solid
Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Xenogears
Pokémon

Favorite Genres:
RPGs, Action

John just returned from this fall's Tokyo Game Show, where he finally got some hands-on playtime with Sega's amazing Dreamcast. Needless to say, he was more than impressed, though he was a bit disappointed that aside from DC, the show was rather unexciting. SCEI had an abysmal showing, and except for a few third-party titles (R4, FFVIII, etc.), the PS seemed pretty tame. Is it time for PSZ? Hmm...

Shawn Smith

It looks as if playing all of these games has screwed up Shawn's brain permanently. Recently, when shopping around for a new car, he kept asking dealers if the models ran at 60 frames per second and if there were weapon upgrades and licensed soundtracks available for them. At one point, he went way off of the deep end and asked what kind of vehicle Solid Snake would drive. What a freak.

Current Favorites
Metal Gear Solid
MediEvil
Wild 9
Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus

Favorite Genres:
Action, Adventure

Sushi-X

Current Favorites
Street Fighter Alpha 3
Virtua Fighter 3tb
Guilty Gear
Rival Schools UBI

Favorite Genres:
Fighting, RPGs

Sushi has been in a bit of a quandary. He's excited about the upcoming PlayStation port of his current favorite, Street Fighter Alpha 3, but upset that a Saturn version has yet to be announced. We often hear him mumbling on and on about how great the 4-Meg RAM cart is, and how much he loves the Saturn's six-button pad. If no Saturn port is announced, hopefully we'll see a DC one...

Guest Reviewer - Jay Silvey

Jay is a 15-year-old who has spent a good deal of his life in the hospital due to kidney failure. When the Make A Wish Foundation offered him one wish, Jay asked to visit *EGM*. He spent two days with us, hanging with the Review Crew. Since he's as hardcore a gamer as they come, we asked him to be a guest reviewer. Check out his review of Wild 9 and check back next issue for more on Jay's visit.

Current Favorites
F-Zero X
GoldenEye
Wild 9
NFL Blitz 99 (Arcade)

Favorite Genres:
RPGs, Fighting

CRUIS'N WORLD

Publisher: Nintendo

Developer: Eurocom

Featured In: N/A

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Fast Gameplay

Worst Feature: Weak Opponent AI

www.nintendo.com

These Cruis'n games should be reviewed in a special category: The cheesy, anti-sim arcade category. Cruis'n World is the kind of racing game you pull out when you gotta play a "non-gamer." Maybe your dad, or an uncle or your pastor. It's so damn simple and cartoon-like a chimp could master it. Now is that a bad thing? Only if you're expecting a fancy sim like Formula One or NASCAR 99 or something. Otherwise it is what it is—a simple, no-frills arcade racing game. Normally I shun such fare but I found myself getting excited over this one. **It's a whole new game—any similarities to the original Cruis'n are merely cosmetic.** Believe me, I wouldn't get into any racing game that used the old Cruis'n USA engine. The frame-rate is really good and the speed simulation is better than a lot of N64 racing games currently on the market. Four-player is kind of slow, but not terrible. A lot of different cars are available, including a three-wheeled Cushman and a couple ATVs. On the road they all perform about the same, so it doesn't really matter what you drive. Overall what I really like is the racing gameplay. It's just challenging enough to keep your attention. My biggest complaint, however, is the cheap, predictable opponent AI. They'll nudge you out in the last few yards of a race a lot. NO FAIR! Otherwise, it's OK.

Dean

Cruis'n World outperforms the decidedly lame original in nearly every way. The control, graphics and frame-rate are all much improved (but sorry, sickos—you still can't run down the animals). I especially like the wheelies, flips and other stunts you can pull off to leap over multicar pileups. Arcade Mode is too easy, but at least this time you get a challenging Championship Mode to keep up your interest for a while.

Crispin

The Cruis'n games aren't about technique or excitement—they are about good ol'-fashion arcade racing. Unfortunately, those two ingredients are just what this game needs. **You know the game is lacking in technique if you can win races without ever letting go of the gas button** (even on expert stages). And you know the excitement is non-existent when even four-player games draw yawns from the participants. Nice-looking, dull-playing.

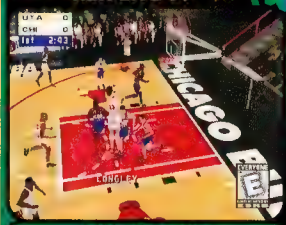
Dan

Cruis'n World is far from being my favorite N64 racer, but I have to admit, **I like it a heck of a lot more than I did the original.** The graphics are nicer (and a lot smoother), the music is actually tolerable this time, and the Championship Mode makes for a nice addition to the game. The control is tight, too. My biggest complaint is that the 4P Mode (which is also very smooth, by the way) isn't nearly as exciting as it should be.

John R

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	7

NBA LIVE 99



Publisher: Electronic Arts

Developer: EA Sports

Featured In: *EGM* #112

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Nice Graphics

Worst Feature: Way Too Easy

www.easports.com

What could be better than NBA Live 99 coming out for the N64? Maybe a Dreamcast version? Anyway, it's about time Live came out for the basketball-starved system. One can only play NBA Courtside for so long. My first impression of Live 99 is that it looks and feels like a deluxe version of Live 98. Don't get me wrong, that's not a bad thing—unless, of course, you're expecting some sort of radical new design fueled by the N64's magical processor. Don't anticipate that. Instead, expect a competent new edition to the Live series featuring classic NBA Live gameplay, good animation and a "different" Arcade Mode. That's the good news. The bad news is, it's still kind of easy. **Even on Superstar setting it's not hard at all to turbo up the lane for the easy dunk.** But that's what a lot of people like about the game, so no big deal, I guess. I'd like to see a bit more technique (like in NBA Courtside) but I'm not too disappointed. I'm disappointed in the Arcade Mode though. It's basically cartoon sounds, a few fire effects and exaggerated jumping—nothing to write home about. Overall the game doesn't break any new ground, but it does offer the N64 owner a very good basketball simulation. And considering that there hasn't been a truly awe-inspiring sports game for the N64 yet, that's high praise.

Dean

NBA Live 99 is a real solid b-ball game that, like its PS counterparts, has one glaring problem: It's too easy! **Single-player games against the CPU are a joke**, even on the highest difficulty setting. The graphics and animation are nice, as is the control, but ultimately the lack of challenge makes it an unworthy 1P game. Multiplayer is a ton of fun, though, and kids will probably dig the Jam-like Arcade Mode. Overall, I prefer Courtside.

John R

It looks like the first hoops sim for the N64 (Kobe Bryant) is still the best one. NBA Live is a decent title, but the choppy animation and erratic frame-rate ruin any chance of this game upsetting the current champ. And what's up with the players running a good 100 mph with the turbo button depressed? At least this title comes with a very goofy NBA Jam-style game. This Arcade Mode, although tacked on, is rather fun.

Dan

Live 99 for the N64 is a strong basketball game for sure, but it has the unfortunate job of going up against NBA Courtside, which is an overall better game. **If you like your b-ball on the easy side, Live may be a better choice for you, because the CPU AI is a joke.** But on the whole, there's not much here that hasn't been done before. As with all EA games, Live 99 is real polished, though I have to ask—wassup with that lame Arcade Mode?

Sushi

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	7	8

RUSH 2: EXTREME RACING USA

Publisher: Midway

Developer: Atari Games

Featured In: *EGM* #112

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Improved Control

Worst Feature: Still A Little Too Foggy

www.midway.com

Rush fans—grab your wallets and head out to the videogame store because Rush 2 is heck of a lot better than the original. For starters, car control is much more refined and responsive. Whereas last year you could hardly turn more than 30 degrees, now you can whip a U-turn with ease if you need to (well, not quite, but...). It's nice to weave in and out of traffic looking for the right lane with the new agile cars. Also key are several new mod options. Beyond suspension, tires, acceleration and the other standbys, motor type, torque and durability are also included. Picking the right engine is key on some of the more challenging tracks. Retrieving certain power-ups requires massive jumping power and some engines just can't handle it. In appearance, the cars are more detailed with brighter paint schemes and better shading effects. In fact, **the entire game has been sharpened-up over last year.** It's not nearly as foggy and grey. Light-sourcing effects and just plain ol' color have turned the look around. As for gameplay, finding all of the keys and Dew cans per track is tough but the rewards are worth the hassle. The search adds many hours of replay. The new stunt track is a blast as well. Overall, Rush 2 is a vastly improved sequel and definitely worth a look, especially for Rush fans.

Dean

Rush 2 is a good racer for anyone who doesn't mind repetitive, mindless gameplay. Although, the keys and Mountain Dew cans do add an extra element to the gameplay. The stunt track is the best part of this racer—there's something therapeutic about flipping your car around like crazy and watching it explode. The rest of the game is average at best, except for the Two-player Mode. I would rent Rush 2 before buying it.

Shawn

You have to wonder if the developers of this game have ever actually driven a car before, because the way it controls is absolutely nothing like you'd expect. Gameplay is much better than the original game though. It feels a bit odd, but the shortcuts and stunts make for interesting races, especially in Two-player Mode. The graphics are horrible—there's not much pop-up, but the smooth candy-like visuals are disgusting.

John D

Forget the NASCARs and F1s...if you want all-out unrealistic, yet fun arcade action, then give Rush 2 a run. The game is a blast. As you'd expect, the game is full of crazy jumps, high-speed stunts and secret paths, giving Rush 2 a distinct and exciting flavor not found in any other racer. I'm disappointed in the lack of a Four-player Mode, even though it was left out purposely for tech reasons. But overall, Rush 2 is a fun experience.

Dan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLA
7	6	6	7

TOP GEAR OVERDRIVE

Publisher: Kemco

Developer: Snowblind

Featured In: N/A

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Solid Gameplay

Worst Feature: Cars Blow Up Too Easily

www.justplainfun.com

I'm surprised by how much I like this game, especially since I wasn't a fan of Top Gear Rally. Top Gear Overdrive looks and feels more like a PS racing title, only a bit smoother and somewhat faster. Actually, make that a lot faster! The frame-rate is really impressive. **Flying through a race firing off turbos is a blast.** It's like a controlled roller-coaster ride. Decent racing gameplay keeps the cars on the track for the most part. A healthy dose of power-sliding and jumping are heavily featured, but not to the point of stupidity (as in San Francisco Rush). Mainly winning comes down to finding the short-cuts and using them consistently. Occasionally it seems like you "magically" jump up four to five positions but not all the time. Finding those shortcuts can be a real challenge, but lots of fun. Overall, I get that tingly "I'm-obsessed-with-winning-all-the-tracks-in-one-sitting feeling." That's a good sign. And, while some of the cheap stuff, like exploding on walls and pillars is lame, I still really like this title. Plugging in the RAM Pak increases the frame-rate and resolution, though it's not all that distinguishable. The game is already good-looking. Car selection is cool too—the new VW bug, SUVs, Cameros—they're all good (well, they're not the real cars, but still...). Overall, a very good game. **Dean**

TGO isn't quite as in-depth and realistic as TG Rally is, but **ultimately it's a lot more fun to play**. The graphics are excellent (if you've got a RAM Pak, they're even better), and the control, once you get used to it, is sweet. The track designs are impressive (mastering shortcuts is a must!), and being able to play the Champ. Mode with up to 4P rules. The music is grating, and cars blow up too easily, but otherwise I dig TG Overdrive. **John R**

Top Gear Overdrive and WipeOut 64 in one month? Finally some decent racers for the N64. **Top Gear Overdrive isn't the most realistic racer around, but that's exactly what I like about it.** I had more fun working my way through this game than I've had in any other racer on the system. I attribute this to the variety of courses, sweet control and upgrade/cash system—the game just feels right. It's definitely worth a purchase. **Shawn**

It seems like there's been an avalanche of racing titles for the N64 recently. **Top Gear Overdrive is certainly one of the better efforts, but it's definitely an acquired taste** Each track has many shortcuts to find, which are key to winning. The annoying part is the ease at which your car explodes. A minor fender-bender encases your vehicle in a ball of flames. Powering up your car is fun and multiplayer is a blast. Worth a try. **Sushi**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	7	7

TWISTED EDGE SNOWBOARD.

Publisher: Midway

Developer: Boss Game Studios

Featured In: *EGM* #112

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Easy To Master Tricks

Worst Feature: Ho-Hum Courses

www.midway.com

With 1080° Snowboarding out, I can't think of a good reason to bother with Twisted Edge. Actually, I can think of two reasons... 1), if the control and the problem with landing in 1080° really rubs you the wrong way, or 2), if you enjoy spending your hard-earned dough on average games. I only hope you weren't *that* disgruntled about the control in 1080°. OK, on to what makes Twisted Edge such an average snowboarding game. First, the game is best described as linear. It's strange to think of a snowboarding game as such but it's true. Why? Each course you play and each stunt track you sail down doesn't have enough shortcuts and variety to keep your interest. I'd just go down a particular track, see a couple of sites, jump a couple of jumps and move on. I expected more from the courses. The modes of play are the same way—they're pretty cut-and-dry. Two-player play is also a major letdown. That's half of the fun in a snowboarding game. I want to compete in a bunch of different ways—not just on a downhill course without much variety or many jumps. On the good side, the trick system in Twisted Edge is very friendly. Once I learned some of the moves, doing them was particularly satisfying and quite cool-looking. In addition, the music is pretty sweet. Rent this one first to be safe. **Shawn**

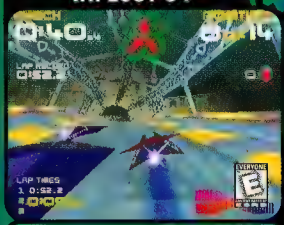
We've reached the apex of the "me-too" snowboarding games. From the success of the original Cool Boarders comes the latest of the horde. But **instead of a highly refined learn-from-the-others entry we have a simply, mildly impressive, arcadish slider.** Mediocre sound and commentary mixed with easy-to-learn trick combos and far-out arcade physics make for an amusing but limited game. Taken for what it is, it's decent. **Dean**

Twisted Edge Snowboarding looks good, sure, and it packs plenty of easy-to-perform tricks, but I really see no reason to buy and play it if you have Nintendo's immensely superior 1080°, which offers better graphics, a more challenging trick system and better tracks overall. **Speaking of tracks, TES needs more of them** (I despise the track-mirroring trick used here and in so many recent racers). For die-hard snowboard freaks only. **Crispin**

How many crappy snowboard games do we have to put up with this year? Like all of them, this looks reasonably nice but suffers from A) being slow, B) being boring and C) having over-simplified controls. As you'd expect **it's full of "attitude," which means you can expect a voice-over featuring a moron** throwing in pathetic expressions like "tuna salad dude." What the hell does that mean? Don't bother. Buy 1080° instead. **John D**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	5	5

WIPEOUT 64



Publisher: Midway

Developer: Psygnosis

Featured In: *EGM* #112

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Incredible Sound

Worst Feature: Nasty Polygon Pop-Up

www.midway.com

This is WipeOut, yes? That 3-year-old PlayStation game, yes? The one that had all of the fab music? Why the hell did Psygnosis bother? Well – **amazingly—it's because they could pull it off**. Somehow, using the miracles of the N64's MIDI chip, we are treated to some of the best music ever on the system, including "real" stuff from Fluke and The Propellerheads as well as remixes of many of the tunes from the PC version of WipeOut XL. Next, the N64 pad is pretty much perfect for WipeOut. It's not until you've played it with an analog pad that you realize that it's actually a beautiful and oddly relaxing game. Also, while previous versions were fast—this is by far the speediest yet. In the games' most extreme mode things get completely out of hand as you hurtle around the tracks at polygon-destroying pace, and if anything, that's WO64's biggest problem. While the gameplay is nippy, the graphics engine doesn't seem to be able to keep up and there's some nasty pop-up on the more complex tracks. It does retain its sense of speed in Multiplayer Mode, though. WipeOut always needed some party spirit, and the Split-screen Mode is just what we needed, especially Four-player. It gets a bit blurry, but it's still fast. So it offers a lot...but is it better than F-Zero X? No, but it's a welcome port of a classic. **John D**

There isn't anything majorly wrong with WipeOut 64 aside from the game's difficulty and the horrible pop-up in most of the courses. **Coming around a turn and seeing what seems like the entire universe pop-up before your very eyes is a bit unsettling.** Other than that the graphics are fine, and the frame-rate is incredible. It's so fast, in fact, at one point I nearly wet myself. I've been a fan of WipeOut for a long time, so I say go for it. **Shawn**

One of the original games that brought the PS into the spotlight makes an impressive showing on the N64. WipeOut 64 is much better than its 32-Bit counterparts for one very good reason: Four-player split-screen action (which runs real smooth with some very minor pop-up). **I still hate slowing down to a halt every time you bump into a wall.** Add to that a very tough challenge level and you can expect to pull out lots of hair. **Dan**

WipeOut 64 turned out to be a lot better than I expected. The graphics aren't much nicer than WOXL for the PS, but the game speed just blazes. **It's even faster (in some cases, a *lot* faster) than F-Zero X.** The Challenge Modes are well-balanced and fun to play, but once you've mastered them all, there's not much more to do. Multiplayer is fun (though 4P is a bit cramped), and as always with WO, the music is excellent. **John R**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	6	7

ACTIVISION CLASSICS

Number Of Players: 1-2

Publisher: Activision

Developer: Activision

Featured In: *EGM* #111

Best Feature: 30 Games For $30

Worst Feature: Only A Couple Are Any Good Now

www.activision.com

Atlantis: pretty tough, pretty mediocre. Barnstorming: really lame. Boxing: slightly fun. Chopper Command: Defender wanna-be. Cosmic Commuter: retarded. Crackpots: fun, but tough. Dolphin: he's no Ecco. Dragster: never saw the fun in this one. Enduro: mindless. Fishing Derby: hard to control. Freeway: still fun today, I gotta admit...but Frogger's better. Frost Bite: really stupid. Grand Prix: boring. Hero: a pretty deep game in its day; a pretty shallow game today. Ice Hockey: no longer fun. Kaboom!: would be awesome if I had a PS paddle. Keystone Kapers: so-so. Laser Blast: hard. Megamania: too sluggish. Pitfall: was cool. Plaque Attack: pretty intense. River Raid: was great, now dull. River Raid 2: not as good as RR 1. Sea Quest: very average. Skiing: boring. Sky Jinx: crap. Spider Fighter: silly. Stampede: sillier, but more fun. Star Master: serious crap. Tennis: worse than Pong, and the CPU is too good. A lot of these games were great in their day, but truth be told, they're no longer fun. 99% of you will play each game for about 60 seconds, then store this disc away for good. The price is reasonable, however, and this compilation provides lots of mindless action where nothing matters but the high score...so if you're still die-hard old school, this disc isn't a bad investment. **Buy it just to have it.**

Dan

I couldn't wait to fire up these classics. Then I played 'em. Man, I can't believe these are the same super-crude ubergames that absorbed so much of my time when I was a wee lad. Now, **few of the 30 games here hold my interest for more than five minutes** (River Raid and Star Master are notable exceptions). Still, Activision Classics packs so much nostalgic charm that it nearly had me weeping from all the warm, fuzzy feelings.

Crispin

Activision Classics may make a few die-hard 2600 fans happy for a couple of days, but for the rest of us it serves only one purpose: to remind us that **95% of the games released before the big crash (of 1983) have one thing in common—they suck.** Pitfall is easily the best game on the disc, and a couple of others stand out, but overall the games on this disc are mostly garbage. Some things are better left as memories.

John R

I honestly don't know why anyone would want to buy this for anything but nostalgic reasons. Maybe as a videogame history lesson or something. Technically the games are perfect to their original forms. Chunky pixels, a few colors and some blips and bleeps for sound effects—incredibly boring stuff! It's like going back to first grade. **If you're young and curious about the old Atari days, then buy it.** Otherwise run away. Fast.

Dean

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
1	1	2	2

ASSAULT: RETRIBUTION

Number Of Players: 1-2

Publisher: Midway

Developer: Telstar

Featured In: *EGM* #110

Best Feature: Two-Player Mode

Worst Feature: Too Easy At Default Difficulty

www.midway.com

First thing's first: Notch up Assault's difficulty the second you slap it in your PlayStation. I beat this game at its default difficulty—which is much too generous with one-ups and health—the first time I played it. That gripe outta the way, Assault ties ASC's One as **the closest PlayStation gamers will get to a proper 3D Contra game**. It packs similar weapons, such as homing missiles and three-way cannons, not to mention the same never-take-your-finger-off-the-trigger action. New twists include the ability to power up individual guns, all of which drain an energy bar sitting at the screen's bottom (OK, so you'll want to take your finger off the trigger sometimes, to let your gun recharge). Otherwise, Assault is a straightforward cruise through enemy-crammed stages so devoid of strategy, you'll soon enter a stupefying shoot-everything trance. It's not all mindless high jinks; a hoverbike stage and a couple of levels that have you fleeing from fireballs keep things from getting too repetitive. Beating the game opens secret codes and such. And the Two-player Mode is really the only way to play if you have a friend handy. Still, Assault lacks the personality and cool Bosses to be mentioned in the same sentence as old school Contra, although it'll certainly scratch any itch for braindead shooting action.

Crispin

Assault may be short on strategy, but there's something mildly satisfying about shooting everything in your path. **Destroying giant insect-things takes up about 80% of the time, while the overly easy Bosses take up the other 20%.** The weapons are good (cannons, shockers, etc.), especially with the kick of the Dual Shock, yet the repetition without stimulation can become tiring. Assault's not bad, but it needs more depth.

Dean

Obviously, **Assault borrows a lot from the old Contra games**. Unfortunately, like so many games of this nature that have come out (including those with the Contra name attached), it falls short of giving us the same feeling the classic Contras gave. Assault may have solid graphics and throw a good amount of flashy action at you, but it's just too simple. You could easily beat this one in one night's rental. It's too bad, really.

Shawn

Stay far away from this game if you hate cheap, unavoidable hits. Assault is a scrolling shooter in the tradition of Contra, complete with gun-toting mercenaries blasting aliens. The bad part is that they can tag you no matter how good you are at the game. To make matters worse, later stages feature obstacles that will sap character lives as well as your patience. The shooting action is still fun, but the skill factor is lacking.

Sushi

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	5	4	5

BACKSTREET BILLIARDS

Number Of Players: 1-4

Publisher: Ascii

Developer: Argent

Featured In: *EGM* #111

Best Feature: Two-Player Mode

Worst Feature: Annoyingly Good CPU AI

www.ascient.com

I want to like Backstreet Billiards, but I can't. It just isn't accurate enough for me. Let me explain: My family had a pool table and I played it a lot in my younger years, so I like the actual game quite a bit. And no, I wasn't some snot-nosed rich kid. The table we had was used—one that my Dad kind of rebuilt. Anyway, that's not important. First, it is way too hard to aim in BB. Since it's a pool sim, you'd think the game would accurately represent how it feels to aim, and then how the balls react to your hit after that. For the most part it doesn't. In addition to this, **the AI opponents are annoyingly good,** which sometimes makes the game seem downright impossible. In the Story Mode, certain players say something like, "This is my first time playing. I hope I win. Wow." And then, of course, they sink every ball on the table—using professional-looking bank-shots, spins and other fancy techniques—and they win. Besides the whole poor translation thing, the dialogue is inaccurate. If the characters you meet up with are supposed to be hustling you, it doesn't come across that way. In the game's defense, taking a shot at any of the numerous play modes against a friend or friends is a lot of fun. In that sense, it truly represents pool...well, except for the aiming thing. Rent this one first to be safe.

Shawn

I don't agree with Sushi on this one...I think Backstreet is the superior pool videogame this month. It's **much easier to get into and has so many more games than Pool Hustler.** The ball movements and cue stick placement are more realistic (the balls roll into the pockets better and the stick adjusts according to what's in its way). Aiming, however, can be frustrating. You'll miss a few because the ball guide leaves too much room for error.

Dan

Backstreet combines a pool sim with a goofy Story Mode to create one cheesy combination. The story is a bit much (you must find your dead father's stolen cue stick, etc., but **the pool portion of the game isn't bad.** The physics are good, although sometimes questionable. The graphics are nothing great—kind of chunky and nondescript. Overall the controls and functions are easy to learn so just playing 8-Ball is pretty fun.

Dean

Now here's a good game of pool with a little story to boot. Backstreet Billiards has solid physics and a very intuitive control interface. There are a decent amount of play options with an amusing if not shallow Story Mode. So how does it stack up to Pool Hustler? It's not as pretty or polished as that game, but BB is still a highly enjoyable game of pool. **If the Story Mode was deeper and a little bit tougher, it could have been the best.**

Sushi

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	7	6	7

Rule 76b

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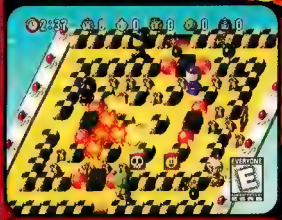
BOMBERMAN WORLD



Publisher: Atlus

Developer: Hudson

Featured In: *EGM* #109

Number Of Players: 1-5

Best Feature: A Lot Of Cool Options

Worst Feature: The &@?!# Isometric Perspective

How typical. The PlayStation gets its first Bomberman and they force in a little taste of 3D. When will the good folks at Hudson Soft learn? Bomberman games are perfectly fine from a top-down, 2D perspective! Objects on the screen tend to get in the way in this 3/4 isometric view. Sure, it doesn't sound like a big deal...until you run into an enemy or a bomb hiding behind a tall tree. Also, a significant chunk of the upper-right and lower-left corners don't fit on my TV screen, because of this same stupid perspective. As my friend Jim Cordano sarcastically stated after losing a few lives in those invisible and deadly corners, **"Here's a tip. When designing a game, make sure the playing area is visible."** Some of the multiplayer stages are also poorly designed—some are asymmetrical, others have floating platforms that again, obscure a good portion of the playing field. On a positive note, the game has several great options, like getting to pick what power-ups will show up in the Maniac Mode or picking a starting set of powers for the Challenge Mode. But disappointment sets in again when you realize BW only has one stage for each of those two cool modes. This game isn't bad at all for a multiplayer PS title...but it is certainly a major letdown, considering its lineage. Super and Saturn Bomberman are more fun.

Dan

Bomberman World is closer to an old-school Bomberman game than other "3D" updates I've seen. The one-player game, as you'd expect, is fun but mostly mindless, with bosses that'll drive you insane. Obviously, **the Multiplayer Mode is where this game is the most fun**. Unfortunately, the three-quarter perspective makes seeing some of the bombs a bit tricky. Overall, I'd recommend at least a rental, if not a purchase.

Shawn

Yawn. Hudson's beginning to get on my nerves. **They're milking the Bomberman franchise to death**, and as a result, we're getting totally stale, unoriginal titles like this one. Bomberman World is uninspiring to say the least, with completely generic stages, lame Bosses, and a "3D" viewpoint that does nothing for the game aside from making it look a little flashier. The game's only saving grace is, of course, its Battle Mode.

John R

Why mess with something that's pretty much perfect? And why insist on giving the graphics a "3D" tilt, by skewing the screen into an isometric layout so loony that the corners don't fit on the screen? **As both a one-player and a multiplayer game, this is another sad attempt at spicing up Bomberman.** It's perfectly playable, but unnecessary. Battle Mode is fun, but again it's been screwed with to the point where it doesn't work.

John D

www.atlus.com

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	4	6

BUSHIDO BLADE 2

Publisher: Square EA

Developer: Lightweight

Featured In: *EGM* #112

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Realistic Swordplay

Worst Feature: Lost Some Cool Features From The First BB

Patience will be rewarded. I was initially disappointed with the sequel to the highly original samurai slasher. The characters are beefier, but the overall detail in the environments took a step back. The fighting mechanics were simplified to two buttons and the music is much more sparse. **These seem like pretty big drawbacks until you consider what was gained over what was lost.** The environments are definitely smaller, but they still allow for plenty of running space while focusing on the action more effectively. The details in the characters' clothes and weapons are much more noticeable. The simplified button schematic eliminates unnecessary slashes and separates the individual styles of each of the characters and variations of weapons efficiently. Last, but not least, the ambient sound has more moments of silence than the original. You don't know how effective this is until you hear a single bird chirp break the silence of an intense match. As much as I admire all that was gained, there are still a few things that are sorely missed and were not replaced. You can no longer take out an opponent's leg or fight crippled from the ground. You also will not be covered in bandages when injured. Still, there are lots of hidden characters to find and many modes to try and conquer. Don't overlook this one.

Sushi

Although **the novelty of its gameplay has worn off a bit**, Bushido Blade 2 is still an intriguing fighter. Its tweaks—namely, simplified control and easier blocking—put a fresh spin on the fighting engine, and I prefer the new control system to the old. The graphics, on the other hand, have taken a step backward. The arenas, all of which are smaller, suffer massive pop-up and look blah. One-player Mode is a bit too easy, too.

Crispin

This one's odd. On one hand you can wrestle with the complicated moves system that allows you to shift stances and adjust your center of balance, while on the other you can whiz through the one-player game in minutes. **It's an admirable change from run-of-the-mill fighters**, but there's an awful lot missing—like any challenge. It conveys the feel of sword fighting very well, but only the 2P games could be considered fun.

John D

www.squaresoft.com

Having not played the original Bushido Blade very much, I was looking forward to getting into BB2. Unfortunately, **while some of the concepts are great, the overall game fails to impress me**. The environments are way too limited (they were cooler in the original), and despite the obvious depth in the game's fight system, it just isn't all that much fun to play. It's not horrible, but I was really hoping for something more substantial.

John R

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	7	6

COOL BOARDERS 3

Publisher: 989 Studios

Developer: Idol Minds

Featured In: *EGM* #111

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Nice Graphics

Worst Feature: Lack Of Structure

Although Cool Boarders 3 looks incredible, it suffers from an unfriendly trick system, inaccurate hit detection and an overall lack of gameplay. It's not a terrible game mind you, it's just not that great. CB3 is definitely a few steps above Pro Boarder from ESPN, but honestly, that's not saying much. The intro, interface screens and art style are done really well, except they look a lot like every other snowboarding game out there. I enjoy the number of events, characters and moves in the game, but then I try to control those characters and do those moves and it all falls apart for me. Using the shoulder buttons, regular buttons and the directional pad to pull off a move can be tricky as hell. In addition, trying to still come in first with a good number of trick points is crazy. In fact, the computer couldn't even do it in the game's demo! The hit detection didn't make doing moves any easier. Sometimes I'd barely touch a rocky patch and totally bail. Other times I'd jump up to ride a rail and just tumble over, even though I was lined up right. **The first Cool Boarders and CB2 had more of an arcade-like feel.** Unfortunately it's been kind of lost in CB3. Overall, I'd buy this one before Pro Boarder (if Pro Boarder is still coming out, that is) but I'd sooner just rent it first. Be aware it has some problems.

Shawn

I own a pair of baggy trousers. I can appreciate that Shawn's Stussy shades are pretty cool. I don't, however, appreciate the inspirational "cool" of snowboarding. **The third "Cool" Boarders is just like the other two**, only now you can hit your opponents Road Rash-style, and the graphics are a bit better. It's a racing game with tricks and it's got nice Dual-Shock rumblings. But it's just another snowboarder, and it's hellishly boring.

John D

As a new build, CB3 has been juiced up with plenty of new tricks, tracks, characters and boards. That's all fine and good but it still seems like performing tricks is too easy. Unfortunately it sets a lower standard to the game overall. **A bit more challenge and reward would be nice.** Otherwise the gameplay and graphics are the best yet. The punch option is good for a laugh as well. CB3 could keep you occupied for a long time.

Dean

Yep, it's another snowboarding game, alright. **Cool Boarders 3 may be from a new developer, but the same-ol', same ol' gameplay is getting kinda stale**—despite the load of new tracks and simplified tricks system. Still, fans of the last game should be happy with the tight control, huge quantity of trick combos and challenging (i.e., tough) competition. I don't see the point of the new punch move, though; it rarely comes in handy.

Crispin

www.playstation.com

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	5	6

DEAD BALL ZONE

Publisher: GT Interactive

Developer: Rage

Featured In: *EGM* #110

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Building Custom Teams

Worst Feature: Bit Of A Learning Curve

www.ggames.com

I feel a little sorry for this game. Dead Ball Zone is fast, fun and slick-looking, not to mention highly reminiscent of the Amiga classic Speedball. But with future-sports games being a bit of a cold fish to most players—and with so many high-profile PlayStation titles (MGS—ever hear of it?) on the way—the lot of you probably won't give DBZ a second look. Trust me—it deserves it. With its ultra-fast gameplay and over-the-top violence (so violent, some players actually vomit), DBZ is both exciting and addicting—especially when in Two-player Mode. **The game does take some getting used to.** Although you can choose from several camera angles, the action moves so fast sometimes that the ball gets lost among the clutter of tiny players. Control is tricky, too, since every button on the joypad is used for something. And mastering the combos takes a lot of effort. But once I figured everything out, I really got into DBZ. Management Mode is surprisingly deep, letting you build custom teams you can pit against those of other players. This mode has you training players, experimenting with formations and healing injured athletes. If such activities don't excite you, however, you're in a bad spot here. You really need to tweak your team from time to time if you're gonna make it far in the leagues

Crispin

I've always enjoyed futuristic sports games. Dead Ball Zone is one of the better ones in this sparse genre. It plays like a violent mix of soccer and hockey (aren't they all?). This game looks fantastic with its silky-smooth animation and nice lighting effects. More importantly, **DBZ treats itself like a serious EA Sports game**—you can customize and save your team through a season and take them to a championship. Nice feature.

Dan

I was a really big fan of the Bitmap Bros. classic Speedball 2 and Rage has done an exceptional job of capturing the simplicity of, and updating this great future-sports game. Normally this kind of thing is overly complicated but **the basic gameplay of DBZ makes it easy to get into and especially good fun as a two-player game.** It's not a "classic" or anything, but it's a more than competent title that's a bit different.

John D

This futuristic soccer-like contest has its moments as a single-player game. But for the most part the AI opponents are pretty hard to beat. Ultimately two-player is the only way to play this game. The fun comes from smackin' your opponent to the ground as much as possible. Whatever you can't do in a serious sports game, you can do here—it's fun. But even so, only marginally fun. **I wouldn't get too excited over this mediocre title.**

Dean

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	
7	7	7	7

DRAGONSEEDS

Publisher: Jaleco

Developer: Jaleco

Featured In: *EGM* #112

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: The Dragons

Worst Feature: Tedious Gameplay

www.jaleco.com

Dragonseeds is a great example of a bad monster-breeding game. Just like any other breeding title, you must raise your monsters to be better fighters. **The battle system is completely random and consists of you trying to guess what the other creature will do.** There is absolutely no skill in this, and having a strong monster increases your odds of doing more damage at best. There are only a handful of minigames to strengthen your creature, and it's very frustrating to spend hours building up your monster only to leave victory in the hands of total luck. There is no story to speak of and the battle mechanics are very weak and lack depth. The graphics are subpar as are the character designs. The game is also very small and limited in scope, with only the one town and nothing to do in it but buy items, play one of two minigames, and fight. It seems like there could've been so much more to Dragonseeds, which would've made for a potentially interesting title. A better battle system would have gone such a long way in salvaging an otherwise lackluster game. As it is, it's too simplistic and wouldn't even be compelling enough for a younger audience. Overall it just doesn't feel very well thought out, and it isn't fun at all—just a quick fix to try and cash in on the new raise-your-own-whatever craze.

Sushi

I enjoy exploring Dragonseeds' complicated inner workings and experimenting with the bizarre dragon types. **Too bad the rock-paper-scissor-type fights make for some terribly repetitive fights.** And the Vs. Memory Card Battle, which could've been an excellent feature (because it generates dragons from any saved game file, like Monster Rancher did with CDs), is useless because you can't use your creations in other modes.

John D

A monster-raising game can be fun, if the gameplay is implemented properly. Dragonseeds has some cool points, like plenty of weapons and items to use and a deep evolution system. This could've been a really addicting game. I almost saw myself playing it long beyond this review period. But **the weak guessing-game combat system kills what little excitement was here.** Plus, the CPU is suspiciously good at guessing...

Dan

The more I play games like this, the less I like them. That's not Dragon Seeds' fault though. **You have to be into the whole Tamagotchi-type thing to really appreciate raising a creature from birth**...but I'm not. So in other words, this game isn't going to convert you into a creature-loving kind of person if you're not already. If the battles made more sense and the dialogue was of higher quality, I may have liked the game a bit more.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	
6	6	6	7

DUKE NUKEM: TTK

Publisher: GT Interactive

Developer: n-Space

Featured In: *EGM* #110

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Level Designs

Worst Feature: Control

www.ggames.com

Early on, Duke Nukem: Time to Kill looked like it had potential. The game has Tomb Raider-esque exploration and gameplay elements mixed in with Duke Nukem's traditional take-me-as-I-am attitude, humor and bad-ass action. How could you miss? Easy. Make everything sluggish. We're talking the action, the controls, the movement...everything. For example, you can't move right away after landing from a standing jump (not only that, but the jumps are real floaty). With analog, Duke has a slight delay when switching from a walk to a run. Running into some walls can stop you cold. Turning is slow. Etc., etc., etc. All of these complaints are pretty minor by themselves, but put them all together and you get one very messy game. Try jumping around platforms or running around tight corners—you'll see what I mean. Too bad...the could've-been-fun Two-player Mode is all but completely ruined because of these poor controls. The only thing that kept me sane while trudging through this game was my wanting to see what the next stage looked like. Each level looks great and is a lot more interesting than the average themed worlds of other action titles. Nevertheless, if you're looking for a great Duke Nukem game on the PS...forget about it. **This is stinker #2.** Time to Kill offers nice graphics, that's about it.

Dan

OK, so it's Duke meets Lara. And yes, some of the textures are slightly pixelized. And yeah, I found myself getting stuck on walls and other objects at times. Still, the game looks and plays really good. It has that fun "Duke Nukem" feel we all know and love. There may be some humor thrown into the game for good measure but even without it, Time to Kill is solid. The lackluster Two-player Mode is a major disappointment.

Shawn

The fact that one of my favorite bands, Stabbing Westward, provided the soundtrack for this kind of helped things along right from the start. Aside from that though, **the game does manage to sustain the whole Duke vibe pretty well.** The graphics are perfectly OK (if not quite Tomb 3-caliber) and the levels are large and well-designed. The controls are a bit sticky in places, but it's certainly better than some other games this month!

John D

Hmmmm. I'm not sure I like Duke in this over-the-head adventure format. Sure you can perform neat jumps and climb stuff without going cross-eyed, but it just doesn't seem enough like Duke. The attitude seems to be a bit tamer too. Time to Kill does offer a good challenge and involved play. **The graphics are a bit on the grainy side and the sound is just OK.** The really sore spot is the choppy framerate. Duke fans should rent first.

Sushi

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	
7	7	6	5

THE FIFTH ELEMENT

Publisher: Activision

Developer: Kalisto

Featured In: *EGM* #110

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: FMV Taken From The Movie

Worst Feature: Annoying Control

www.activision.com

I suppose it's only fair that—seeing as how I wrote the long review of Metal Gear Solid, the PlayStation's best game—I'd have to write the long review of The Fifth Element, the system's worst. **This thing is horrid in every respect, a painful fact that becomes clear after a minute of play.** Lousy control is the main culprit here. Using a modified version of the already flawed Nightmare Creatures' engine, your on-screen alter ego (either gun-happy Korben or martial artist Leeloo) are way too floaty with their jumps and much too sluggish when turning. Even worse, you have to worry about multiple button combos to do simple things like blocking or walking slowly. Enemies are incredibly cheap, often getting in several sucker punches before you can dodge or counterattack. At the same time, they're incredibly stupid, too. Most baddies adhere so strictly to their scripted routines they don't even react when you shoot or punch them. Puzzles are all of the braindead, collect-item-or-hit-switch-and-watch-door-open-elsewhere variety. Awkward camera angles pop up constantly. Cripes, the game's even glitchy; sometimes the sound cuts out, and you'll discover a delay between when you fire your gun and the joypad rumbles. Only the FMV is worth watching, but that's why I pay for cable

Crispin

Come on...you have to be kidding me. Being a fan of the movie, I thought maybe the game translation would be fun. I was wrong...dead wrong. **Terribly awkward control, a poor excuse for a camera and some of the lamest puzzles I've ever encountered** plague The Fifth Element. The game doesn't feel right, and most importantly it's just not fun. Leeloo looks pretty good though. Overall, don't buy this game—you'll be mad if you do.

Shawn

Oh man, right off the bat this thing suffers from really bad control. **The combination of the "follow-cam" and Corben' and Leeloo's limited mobility make for one frustrating experience.** Major sound problems too – often gunfire noise will cut-out during battle. As for the story—accomplishing all the objectives is made twice as hard due to the crazy sweeping camera view and wacky gameplay. It can be done, but what's the point?!

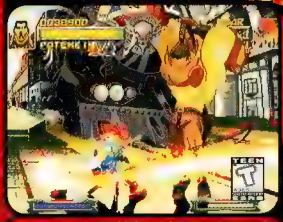
Dean

Isn't it a little odd when developers choose to break fundamental rules of action/adventure games? **Bad character control, confusing button layout and a choppy frame-rate all conspire to make The Fifth Element a forgettable experience.** Contrary to what some people may believe, it's no fun getting hit automatically and from enemies you can't see. And I thought watching Bruce Willis in an orange shirt was unpleasant...geez! Pass.

Sushi

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	4	2	2

GUILTY GEAR



Publisher: Atlus

Developer: Arc Systems

Featured In: N/A

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Lots Of Action On Screen

Worst Feature: Balance Of Characters

www.atlus.com

Now this is a real surprise. I won't say Guilty Gear is the best 2D fighter on the PlayStation (Alpha 2 is still preferred), but it's easily number two. **The animation quality displayed is nothing short of awesome succeeding on the PlayStation where Marvel Super Heroes and X-Men vs SF failed.** The action is fast and frantic with a nice amount of technique. The music and sound effects are very cool and it's all put together with some nice screen transitions. I'm not crazy about the instant death move which is easily avoidable by later stage computer opponents as well as human players. It's not like Tekken where it can take you by surprise since the entire screen tints red, leaving you more than enough time to perform the counter move. Another area of concern is the balance of the characters. Some characters are just way too cheap and powerful. You'll figure out just how powerful when playing the higher difficulty levels. That said, Guilty Gear is an impressive effort and is sure to please. Be warned that play mechanics-wise, it's in the "wild" X-Men vs. Street Fighter/Marvel Super Heroes-style of fighting, with super air jumps, high-flying combos and exaggerated action. If that doesn't bother you too much, you should definitely give Guilty Gear a try. Otherwise, try to rent it first to see if it suits your tastes.

Sushi

When I first heard of Guilty Gear, I was pretty excited. Could it be? A worthy 2D fighter other than my beloved Street Fighter series? Well, almost. The visuals are pretty impressive. Guilty Gear fills the screen with great effects with a tolerable level of slowdown. But I found a lot of the fancier moves to be too hard to pull off effectively and a lot of level three attacks to be too powerful. **Pretty cool...but this is no Street Fighter II.**

Dan

I wanted to like Guilty Gear, but I just can't get excited about it, no matter how hard I try. The cookie-cutter gameplay is uninspiring, and the slowdown, while somewhat minimal for a PlayStation fighter, still gets on my nerves. The character designs are OK (nothing mindblowing), and the animation is pretty good, but **on the whole there's not enough depth here to keep true fighting fans satisfied.** A solid rental.

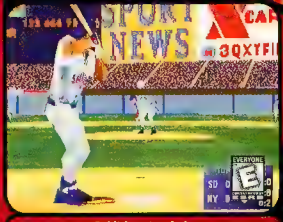
John R

Guilty Gear is a decent fighter with a number of cool-looking characters and lots of flash. I like most of the killer combos in the game, except one that literally is a killer—an incredibly cheap one-hit kill with unlimited usage. Luckily it's blockable. Seasoned fighting game fanatics most likely will not like GG's insulting simplicity but newbies will dig all of its snazzy visual treats and easy-to-pull-off Street Fighter-esque moves.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	7

HARDBALL 99



Publisher: Accolade

Developer: Mindspan

Featured In: *EGM* #112

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Training Mode

Worst Feature: Choppy Animation

www.accolade.com

The Hardball series is one of the longest-living videogame sports franchises out there that has yet to break out into a classic. I'm afraid that's not going to change with this year's version. Hardball 99 updates the look of the series and tries to catch up to the current efforts from 989 and EA Sports, but the problem is that they're still playing catch-up with last year's releases. **Everything from the character builds to the play calling seems dated and would have been average-at-best a year ago.** The most crucial area of a baseball title is the pitcher/batter confrontation. The pitching options in H99 are limited and predictable, while the batting interface is unrealistic. It's just silly to choose an option to hit an opposite field hit and be able to do it 95% of the time. Not even Tony Gwynn can manage a feat like that. Speaking of hitting, the feeling you get from connecting with a ball is very disappointing. It's hard to judge the ball trajectory until the ball is well into the field, making it difficult to manage runners who are already on base. And then there's the sound. The announcer sounds choppy and most of the sound effects seem off. If you want to see how much impact it has on the game, try playing it with the volume down—it's better! I think it's time for Accolade to start over from scratch.

Sushi

Ouch. Believe me, I take no pleasure at all in dogging the efforts of hard-working game developers, but I really can't think of a single reason why I'd recommend Hardball 99 to anyone when **there are three far, far superior baseball games already available for the PS** The graphics and animation are awful, the sound effects are hideous, and the gameplay, while not a total failure, is pretty darn weak. Don't even bother renting this one.

John R

Unless you're really into stats, you might want to look elsewhere for your baseball action. **Hardball 99 has more than a few problems.** The frame-rate is far from smooth, the animation is terrible at key moments (mainly batting), and the all-important hitting interface is inaccurate at best, which really hurts the gameplay. The All-Time team which includes Ruth, Jackson, etc. is cool but overall this one is only so-so.

Dean

I'm really not much of a baseball fan, but **even I can tell a stinker when I see one.** All you need to do is stick this, Triple Play 99, MLB 99 and even VR Baseball 99 side-by-side and let the comparison speak for itself. Hardball 99 doesn't hold a candle to any of these games, either visually or from a gameplay standpoint. What else do you need to hear? Save yourself the trouble and go with one of the aforementioned games.

Crispin

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	3	3	4

LUCKY LUKE

Publisher: Infogrames

Developer: Infogrames

Featured In: N/A

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Stylized Graphics

Worst Feature: Slow, Insulting Gameplay

www.infogrames.com

Why is it that whenever we're told that "this is actually aimed at kids," what that usually seems to mean is "we were working on this for ages, and then we realized that it sucked, so we changed the marketing spiel so that it's aimed at kids...because kids can tolerate stuff that sucks more." **Lucky Luke is being touted as a "kids game" and guess what? It doesn't suck anywhere near as much as you'd expect.** It starts off pretty bad I'll admit—sticking a slow, dull, tedious and boring platform section right slap-bang at the beginning is enough to put anyone off, but persevere and you'll find that it improves. As you can see from the screenshot, Lucky Luke is a cowboy sheriff, and all of the gameplay centers on particularly cowboyish stuff. Chasing trains on horseback, shooting at bad guys and, for some reason, blowing up stuff with dynamite. Although aimed at kids, it has to be said that much of the gameplay is probably far too simple to stimulate most young, videogame playing minds. If you've ever seen a 6-year-old completely cream an experienced gamer at something like Tekken, I'm sure you'll know where I'm coming from. Still...cowboys have been ignored in video games, so at least this is original. It looks quite nice too—and it's only $20. Not the greatest, but definitely not bad.

John D

Yes, I know this game's geared toward youngsters, but I imagine **even kids would find most of Lucky Luke's levels a bit on the boring side**—especially during the first half of the game. Aside from the decent mine-cart levels and a few cool bonus games, most stages are so simplistic that you can nearly play them with your eyes closed. Of course, if you did that, you'd miss out on the graphics, which are LL's only strong point.

Crispin

If I was much younger, Lucky Luke might have done more for me. Imagine a world where Woody from *Toy Story* might live. That's Lucky Luke. Admittedly, most of the puzzles and action sequences are quite original, easy to get into and most importantly fun. The game, in most cases, is REALLY easy, but it's still a good time. Overall, look into Lucky Luke either for your kid, if you're a kid or if you like lucky cowboys.

Shawn

Lucky Luke—it's geared toward kids and it'll only cost $20. I think we're into a new genre of games here. **I didn't want to, but I found myself enjoying the simple yet engaging levels in LL.** The cartoony atmosphere and cheesy characters are tailor-made for the kiddies. Some of the gameplay is a bit clunky (Luke walks way too slow) and a few levels may be too tough for very young gamers but overall 8- to 12-year-olds should dig it.

Dean

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	5	5

MEDIEVIL

Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment

Developer: SCEE

Featured In: *EGM* #110

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Solid Gameplay

Worst Feature: Screwy Camera

www.playstation.com

In a mostly dull world full of brown and/or sickeningly colorful 3D action adventure games (thanks to Johnny England for that one) MediEvil comes along and gives me hope. Besides having excellent 3D graphics and a speedy frame-rate, **MediEvil gives me the feeling I used to get while playing Ghouls 'N' Ghosts.** OK, maybe it doesn't play *that* good but it still kicks ass. MediEvil's solid gameplay makes you want to keep playing level after level, finding all of the secrets you can. In addition, MediEvil has one of the coolest main characters around. Sure, he has a Skull Monkey-esque look but the whole fraud/hero thing and the way he talks during in-game cutscenes more than makes up for that. In fact, all of the voices and dialogue in the game are pretty sweet—funny but not obnoxious. And while we're on sound, the music in MediEvil (besides just being done well in general) fits the game perfectly. All of these features add up to give you a solid and fun gaming package—one that you'll undoubtedly play again and again. The only problems I see are the camera going screwy in some places not allowing you a good view of what's going on around you and how easy some of the Bosses are (as cool as some of them look). Still, MediEvil is one to check out—I'll put my money into it.

Shawn

MediEvil's cool *Nightmare Before Christmas* look is one of the game's strong points, while the swirling camera angles are definitely a weak point. **I'd classify the game as an action/RPG "light."** Light because the battles and puzzle solving are on the easy side as is the overall objective of the game. No doubt it's a solid package but it's definitely geared toward a younger audience. That's fine as long as you don't mind.

Dean

Although I'm getting fed up with these cutesy 3D action/platform games, **MediEvil packs enough puzzles, weird weapons and, for lack of a better term, "meat" to its gameplay** to keep me interested until the end. You get a cool mix of indoor and outdoor levels. Some stages—particularly the floating ghost ship—are damn near amazing. Analog control's touchy, so you're best off going digital when on platforms and narrow ledges.

Crispin

On the surface, MediEvil looked like a bland action title. I'm pleased to say that it is quite entertaining and reminds me a little of Ghouls 'N' Ghosts. **The action moves along at a nice pace and the weapons your character uses are fun to use.** The story is quite funny although it seems forced at times. The music is appropriately gothic and mixes well with the action on screen. You'll either love this game or remain indifferent to it.

Sushi

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	6	6

METAL GEAR SOLID

Publisher: Konami

Developer: Konami

Featured In: *EGM* #112

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Incredible Story

Worst Feature: Could Be Longer

www.konami.com

Forget everything you know about the term "interactive movie." That tired, perennially negative concept has been singlehandedly redefined and made respectable by Hideo Kojima's Metal Gear Solid - **easily the most cinematic masterpiece of game design on any system ever.** Like an excellent action flick, MGS intertwines fact, fiction and humor (it frequently pokes fun at itself for being a game), while weaving a multilayered tale that right to the very end packs more twists than an entire season of the *X-Files*. You'll find no shortage of innovations, either; the game's use of the Dual-Shock, memory card and, er...other things (no spoilers here) will astound you. And so will the gameplay, which is crammed with one heartstopping near-encounter after another (waiting for elevators to open, with guards patrolling all around you, is one of many pee-in-your-pants moments). Yet MGS's greatness is painted as much by its tiny, fine-brush details as by its broad strokes of gameplay excellence. Look for maggots writhing in bathroom muck, scurrying mice and innumerable other graphical details, as well as plot nuances that only become clear once you've beaten the game. In fact, you'll want to replay this 14-hour adventure just to relive its story, not to mention see the second ending.

Crispin

Unbelievable. Metal Gear Solid not only lives up to the hype, it surpasses it in every way imaginable. From beginning to fantastic end, MGS is loaded with incredible plot twists, spectacular gameplay and one of the best stories I've ever been fortunate enough to experience. **I haven't felt this kind of overall satisfaction with a game since the glory days of the SNES** (Super Metroid, Zelda, etc.). An absolute masterpiece.

John R

Metal Gear Solid is simply incredible. Maybe "incredible" isn't strong enough an adjective here...this game is so full of innovation, so full of surprises, so full of fantastic design, that compliments don't do it justice. You'll have to experience MGS to understand what I mean. This masterpiece deserves all of the hype it received. **It's realistic and gritty, but it never forgets that it's a videogame.** Here it is: the first "10" ever in my *EGM* career.

Dan

Part action movie, part action game, the dynamics of MGS will blow you away. **It's so much more than a game—it's an experience.** Technically there's nothing better on the PlayStation, the story is one of the best you'll ever come across and the sense of drama and emotion conveyed throughout is unbelievable. Seguing seamlessly between frantic action and tenderly scripted moments makes it a joy to behold. Buy it. Now.

John D

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
10	10	10	8

NHL 99

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Developer: EA Canada

Featured In: *EGM* #112

Number Of Players: 1-8

Best Feature: Great Atmosphere, AI

Worst Feature: Sluggish Frame-Rate (Sigh...)

www.easports.com

As much as I hate to say it, I'm a little bit disappointed with NHL 99. Overall, nearly everything about the game has been slightly improved over NHL 98. The AI is smarter, the goalies are tougher (those trick plays are a lot harder to execute this year), and the TV-like presentation is even better than it was last year. There are more options and features (the Coaching Drills, while simplistic, are very useful), a new shot meter (which, to be honest, isn't really necessary), and analog control (which is far, far more precise than Face Off 99's analog control). Pretty much everything that made last year's game so great is here in even better form; except for one major problem. Oddly enough, while the ice looks much more detailed than last year, and the players both look better and animate better, the frame-rate took a major, major hit. **I don't know about you, but I'd sacrifice non-crucial stuff like ice detail for a blazing frame-rate any day.** One of the main reasons NHL 98 was so great last year was because of its super-fast, hard-hitting gameplay, and for some incredibly stupid reason, EA let that slip away this year by botching the frame-rate (even on All-Star difficulty, it's not as fast as NHL 98). If you can deal with this, you have another great hockey game. Personally, I think I'll stick with NHL 98.

John R

NHL 99 is this year's hockey champion in my eyes. Everything about it is well-done. **Along with the strong gameplay and fluid animation, the play-by-play commentary is amazing.** It follows the action on the ice down to the second. The difficulty levels and opponent AI are neatly balanced as well, although sometimes scoring comes a little too easy (on any level). That possibly could be a goalie AI weakness. Overall a great game.

Dean

What happened? My beloved NHL series took a serious dive in the frame-rate department. EA Sports seems to always have a problem in this area, but 99 actually runs worse than 98! **If you can look past the chop-chop, you'll still find a very solid hockey game underneath.** NHL 99's passing is a bit too accurate and tight, making this game a lot easier to get into than NHL Face Off 99. Still, I can't get past the crappy frame-rate.

Dan

Last year, NHL 98 ruled the roost with equal parts simulation and hard-hitting action. **This year seems too heavily weighted toward the simulation end.** The action moves extremely slow which wouldn't be that bad, but the animation is choppy making for an unfulfilling experience. The commentary is still top-notch and the overall ambience is second to none. The list of new features isn't nearly enough to make up for the loss in playability.

Sushi

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	RE-PLAY
6	9	7	7

NHL FACE OFF 99

Publisher: 989 Studios

Developer: Killer Game

Featured In: *EGM* #112

Number Of Players: 1-8

Best Feature: Fast Gameplay

Worst Feature: Questionable Control

www.playstation.com

Slowly but surely, 989 is ironing out all of the problems with the Face Off series. This year's game may be only slightly improved in the visual department over last year, but **the AI and gameplay are very noticeably enhanced.** The goalies aren't complete morons anymore, and (for the most part) the players react more realistically in given offensive and defensive situations. Sometimes it seems like the CPU goalies have an unfair advantage, but once you improve your defensive skills, that actually makes for a more challenging game anyway. Aesthetically, FO99 is up and down. On one hand, the game is super fast, and quite smooth too. The ability to adjust game speed is nice (and important, since the default speed is way too fast for anyone who's into realism). On the other hand, the animation is a bit on the weak side (only at the slowest game speeds do transitions look right), and the sounds, while certainly improved over last year, are still lacking (play-by-play is nice, but it still doesn't touch NHL's). Control is odd, too. I usually prefer analog control, but in FO99, it's not nearly as precise as it should be (it feels way too stiff, making routine things like crossing in front of the net or landing a check way too difficult). On the whole, I like Face Off 99 (it's about time), but it's still not the best hockey game.

John R

As NHL 99's only real competition, Face Off 99 is creeping up. It looks great—the extra polygons have really spruced it up. Plus it's insanely fast! Luckily a game speed control lets you adjust. **But compared to NHL 99, Face Off suffers from stiffer animation and a weaker checking system.** Yet, at the same time, its AI players are always able to wreck you!? Seems unfair. Plus, scoring goals is overly tough. I'll stick with NHL 99.

Dean

This year's Face Off is impressive. The drop pass work well, the passing is way tougher than in NHL 99 (which makes it more realistic in my opinion) and the animation is smooth. The game can be hard to follow because the puck moves too fast and the highlights underneath active players are too hard to see on the ice. **The goalies can get pretty retarded**, leaving the net too often and ignoring threats that are only a foot away.

Dan

Following the impressive GameDay 99 is the latest installment of the Face Off series. This time out, the graphics have been pumped to even higher levels with great character animations. The presentation is pure TV-style, and the screen scrolling is handled very smoothly. On the down side, the commentary isn't as good as NHL 99 and **you have to drink a 24-pack of Jolt cola to keep up with the default speed setting.** Hyper.

Sushi

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	RE-PLAY
8	7	7	7

O.D.T.

Publisher: Psygnosis

Developer: Psygnosis

Featured In: *EGM* #112

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Ambitious Design

Worst Feature: The Gameplay

www.psygnosis.com

Remember when Psygnosis used to be really hot stuff? Something has happened recently, and O.D.T. is a perfect illustration. In a month where we've extensively played games like Metal Gear Solid and Zelda, it becomes *so* apparent that the bar has been raised in game quality. **O.D.T. suffers at many fundamental levels,** with its most pressing problem being control; it's nothing short of dire. There's a bizarre time-lag between the joypad and what happens on screen, and the way that the whole thing has been thought out just makes it look like it hasn't been play tested. The combat system is sluggish and frustrating, and while exploring you find yourself frequently falling to your death because you couldn't see a stupidly placed hole in the ground. The camera system is a joke—sometimes it floats Tomb Raider style, and sometimes it's fixed in such a way that all of your controls end up the wrong way around. And the graphics engine sucks. Polygons and textures tear, warp and make things very confusing. The fact that the game is so ambitious falls by the wayside. Yes, there's an effective magic system in there. Yes, there are different character attributes that allow you to enjoy the game in different ways. But it's nasty. I could get into the whole Jules Verne vibe—but only if it was playable. Yuck.

John D

This is so annoying! How can a game with such awful controls possibly make it through any kind of quality check? Playing with the analog controller is practically impossible, and even when you do get to grips with the stupid quirks you end up falling off ledges and down holes. **Stuff like this makes me so mad.** The graphics are slow and choppy, and frankly it's such a below-average game it'll be forgotten in no time.

Crispin

I actually found that travelling to the hospital to have my appendix removed was somewhat more appealing than spending some time with O.D.T. You can see that the whole thing is very ambitious, and it sets out to establish a certain style with the whole Jules Verne gig—but **it's not that appealing.** The different character classes make for some variety, but they're all real pigs to control. And why is the frame-rate so bad?

Dean

I've said it before, "Psygnosis used to be the s***," but yet again they've messed up. **I can appreciate how ambitious this is**—but underneath it's a second-rate 3D action game with delusions of grandeur. Graphically it's extremely poor with some terrible glitches, but more importantly it's a pig to control. The story line is commendable, and the more RPG-like elements are a nice addition, but ultimately it's just a bad game.

Dan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	RE-PLAY
6	5	5	4

ODDWORLD: ABE'S EXODDUS

Publisher: GT Interactive
Developer: Oddworld Inhabitants
Featured In: *EGM* #109

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Quick Save Feature

Worst Feature: So Many Commands To Remember

www.ggames.com

Since Abe's Exoddus is only a sequel in an unusual sense (it's sort of a filler game, like an expansion pack—see issue #109), I can forgive that it plays almost exactly like the original game. **Oh yeah, "more of the same" is also easier to swallow since the original is so damn cool** (don't let me throw you off, however—Exoddus has a few new gameplay elements worth checking out, like multiple Mudokon control). Perhaps my favorite addition to the engine is the ability to quick save your position at any point. Frustrated critics of the very tough Abe's Oddysee can now have a little peace of mind knowing players can go over one particularly tough puzzle over and over, without having to go back several screens after dying. First time Oddworld players may become intimidated by Exoddus' expanded features...you'll have to memorize over a dozen different button combinations to get Abe through the game. Luckily, Exoddus has a fantastic tutorial system that gently breaks in new players and old (and after an hour or so of playing, you'll get used to the controls and commands with little hassle). So if you're an Abe fan, here's another excellent title from Oddworld Inhabitants for you to check out. If you've never played the original, don't miss out on this wonderfully beautiful, exotic and addicting series. **Dan**

Abe's Exoddus is everything the previous game was and more. There are still a load of annoying spots where trial and error is the only way to advance, but with unlimited lives available, all you need is just a little patience. Anyway, all characters being able to use GameSpeak is a great feature, and so is the whole emotion thing. The story, graphics and gameplay make for an incredible gaming experience. This one's a solid buy. **Shawn**

So what if Abe's antics aren't quite as fresh the second time around. **This sequel (more of a mission pack, really) will still impress fans of the original.** What's new here (instant save, ability to possess multiple enemies, more control options, etc.) adds welcome depth to the gameplay, without making the game too complicated. And, of course, the superb graphics, animation, puzzles and humor of the original are all intact. **Crispin**

Abe is back and he's awesome. My big gripes about the first game were certain frustrating obstacles and restart points. These have been totally addressed, making this sequel nearly flawless. **Incredible cinemas packed with humor and emotion blend seamlessly with the action.** Great sound effects and tight controls add to the experience. The quest is long with only a handful of slow spots. This is a must have for PlayStation owners. **Sushi**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	
9	9	8	7

POOL HUSTLER

Publisher: Activision
Developer: ASK
Featured In: *EGM* #111

Number Of Players: 1-6

Best Feature: Realism

Worst Feature: Not Enough Play Styles

www.activision.com

I consider myself a pretty good pool player in real life so I was pretty anxious to put Pool Hustler through its paces. I was really surprised by the realism in the game, with precision ball physics that leave little room for error. Too little room unfortunately. One of the fundamentals of videogame pool is to concede that you can't accurately portray the depth of the table and the balls (with current console technology...Virtual Pool on the PC is the exception), so you need to compensate and make it more forgiving. The old Side Pocket series did this really well and so does Backstreet Billiards. Does this make Pool Hustler a bad game? Absolutely not. You just have to retrain yourself to the exactness of the game. It's necessary that you do because the computer-controlled characters don't mess around. **After the first moderately challenging foe, you get thrown to the wolves.** This may seem cheap at first, but spending some real time with the game going through the handy Tutoring Mode and practicing will allow you to compete on even ground. Because of the learning curve, this isn't the best game for multiplayer action unless you compete against others that know the game well. The wagering aspect of the game is cool, but there's no story to speak of. This one is for patient hustlers only. **Sushi**

Pool Hustler pales in comparison to Backstreet Billiards. The control scheme isn't as intuitive, the disc offers too few pool game variations (four vs. BB's 14) and the aiming is very hard to get down pat. The aiming line would've benefitted from a higher resolution (so the line is easier to see and therefore, more accurate from the top-down view). Overall, Pool Hustler is a very ho-hum experience...**NES Lunar Pool is more exciting.** **Dan**

I haven't sat down with a pool game and played it consistently since Side Pocket on the NES (I much prefer the real deal), but to my surprise, Pool Hustler is actually quite playable. **The physics are excellent, and the control setup is very easy to get into** (two important factors in any game of this type). A larger variety of game choices would've been nice, but overall I can't complain. If you're a fan of video pool, check this out. **John R**

The trickier of the two pool games we're reviewing this month, **Pool Hustler requires some serious practice—and even more patience—before you get the hang of it.** Its aiming guide doesn't hold your hand like in Backstreet Billiards, forcing you to hone your virtual-pool skills if you're going to sink anything other than simple shots. Trouble is, PH would be more fun—and a much better party game—if it were easier to play. **Crispin**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	
7	7	6	7

RUNNING WILD

Publisher: 989 Studios
Developer: Universal Interactive
Featured In: *EGM* #112

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Speedy Frame Rate

Worst Feature: Childish Look And Feel

www.playstation.com

Kids will love Running Wild as soon as they start it up. Here's why: The game's fairly easy, it has bright, colorful graphics in every level and the cast consists of all sorts of cool-looking animals, both male and female. It's kind of like playing an episode of Barney, except not as dopey and there aren't any annoying kids or dinosaurs around. The graphics are pretty decent (with an incredible frame-rate), the control is very easy to get into and the overall feel of the game is tight. Running Wild is quite fun but it's not what you'd call an intense racer. Take a game like Mario Kart on the N64 for instance. Although Mario Kart's characters are about as cartoony and cute as they come, the racing aspect of the game can get intense. Running Wild on the other hand (even though it can be difficult at times) doesn't really get *that* intense. Instead, you play through the game, have a good time but then realize you finished it in a day...maybe two at most. There may be a lot of secrets you open up after beating certain levels of play—like options, tracks and characters, etc.—but even that stuff doesn't last long. With that said, if you like a more childish gaming experience, or have kids...or are a kid for that matter, look into Running Wild. It's not the most incredible racer in the world, but it's fun for what it is. **Shawn**

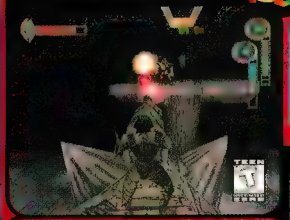
If you can somehow muster interest in a racing game starring annoying animals, you just might like Running Wild. Although I wish it offered more tracks, the ones here pack plenty of tricky bits and shortcuts, giving the game more depth than its for-kids-only appearance leads you to believe. Still, **many tracks are too similar to each other**, and the power-ups are flat-out lame. At least you a get a smooth Four-player Mode. **Crispin**

Running Wild had potential. It's fast, frantic and fun. I love the level designs—each stage has well-placed obstacles, speed boosts and power-ups. So not only do you have to be speedy, but you have to use a lot of skill and quick reflexes to place first in the races. **But you know what sucks? Running Wild only has six tracks.** They alter a bit on Medium and Expert levels, but a game like this desperately needs more variety than that. **Dan**

The whole premise of this game is weak. Everything from the "kiddy," upright running animals, to the blah-looking 3D track environments screams first-generation game. On top of that, there's very little depth. **Outside of speed, size and a few other odd power-ups, running and jumping are the extent of the controls.** On the plus side, it is fairly fast, but that alone doesn't save this below-average game. Take a pass on this one. **Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	
6	5	5	5

SMALL SOLDIERS



Publisher: Electronic Arts

Developer: Dreamworks

Featured In: *EGM* #108

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Nice Graphics

Worst Feature: Annoying Control

www.ea.com

***Small Soldiers*—a decent movie. Small Soldiers—a below-average game.** Why? First we have the hit-detection problems. There's nothing more fun than getting stuck on a wall, in a doorway or on an object...especially when an enemy is laying into you with a rocket. Notice the sarcasm. Next we have the control. This is by far the biggest problem in the game. Let me explain—when moving forward, your character has a certain momentum that builds up. As you turn right or left, he continues to move forward with a sort of arc movement. Although this may not seem like a problem, when you're near a ledge, in a narrow corridor or trying to target an enemy, this control flaw (at least what I consider to be one) is REALLY annoying. So you have to literally stop, *then* turn and *then* move in the direction you want. Otherwise you do this annoying forward arc thing. Those two major problems take the fun out of the game. It's unfortunate really, considering how cool the story behind SS is (using the backstories behind the Commando Elite and the Gorgonites instead of simply making the movie into a game). In addition, the graphics look great and the art style creates a great mood. Two-player play is fun but again, the control is an issue. Overall, rent this one. I wouldn't recommend buying it. **Shawn**

Why make a "game of the film" that isn't? Why make a game of a film that uses excellent rendered visuals and then not use said visuals anywhere in the game? Why make the controls appalling? Why make the collision detection so bad you can get stuck on corners or even in apparent open space? Why make the "turning circles" of the characters oil tanker-like? Most importantly...**why bother with this complete waste of space?** **John D**

Well here's a surprise—a movie-license game that has little in common with the flick on which it's based (you're not even toys). Not so surprising, however, is that **Small Soldiers stinks as badly as most movie-based games**. Although the graphics are really quite good, the game itself is a dull, repetitive, mindless third-person shooter with sluggish control and horrid camera problems. Even the two-player Deathmatch Mode is boring. **Crispin**

An interesting film license coupled with a generic third-person adventure game equals about 11 hours out of your life you'll never get back. The environments and most of the special effects are nice to look at, and the missions have multiple tasks to accomplish. **The problem with all this is that we've seen this all before.** It's almost a paint-by-the numbers-type of adventure which adds nothing new and isn't executed well. **Sushi**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	
5	6	3	4

STREAK

Publisher: GT Interactive

Developer: SingleTrac

Featured In: *EGM* #111

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Surprisingly Fast

Worst Feature: Overwhelmingly Average

www.gtinteractive.com

Is anyone else getting tired of all this snowboarding/skateboarding culture getting slipped into games? Everywhere you look now there's some "dude" with a stupid name (like "Edge" or "Grooves"), some big trousers, a haircut sillier than mine and some kind of board. **At least SingleTrac's Streak has a go at being a bit different.** Rather than straight snowboarding, Streak mixes in a little WipeOut to keep things exciting, and has everyone scooting around on *Back to the Future*-esque hoverboards (or GEMblades as they're pompously referred to here) so that you don't have to worry about hills. As an overall package Streak isn't particularly bad. The graphics are above-average, although nothing to write home about, while the action is reasonably slick, and surprisingly fast. Overall though, it's just overwhelmingly, um... adequate. The controls are fine, although a little sensitive if you use the analog pad, and the track design is very effective. Parts of some tracks double back on themselves and incorporate some unique bits of scenery (the graveyard and carnival tracks are both notable) but nothing here is spectacularly original. It's a nice, solid racing game that supports up to four players with the .ink cable – but in the end it's still one of those "instantly forgettable" products. **John D**

Further proof that SingleTrac is keen on re-creating its old series for GT Interactive, **Streak is like a better-playing Jet Moto 2—with tricks.** And the tricks system itself illustrates SingleTrac's penchant for putting cool spins on tired gameplay ideas. Instead of merely granting points, successful tricks boost top speed— a nifty idea. Plenty of cool tracks and the linked Four-player Mode complete this competently designed racer. **Crispin**

Give this one points for originality. The tracks are all very creative (especially the carnival) and equally fun to race on. I only wish some of them weren't quite so narrow. The frame-rate is fast, even during background-heavy areas. I also like the confidence meter and turbo boost options. Both increase the racing gameplay to a higher level. Overall, **Streak feels like a snowboarding game, only much faster and more interesting.** **Dean**

Streak is flat-out fun, but that fun comes at a cost. You can pull all kinds of cool board tricks to make jumps where you wouldn't think they're possible, but the collision detection is too sensitive in parts. This isn't helped by the crazy track layout which makes you work for every jump. Playing a track over and over again is definitely required in order to advance to new circuits with enough points. A bit sloppy and hard, but fun. **Sushi**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	
7	8	7	7

TEST DRIVE 5

Publisher: Accolade

Developer: Pitbull Syndicate

Featured In: *EGM* #110

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Fast Frame-Rate

Worst Feature: A Little Difficult

www.accolade.com

Compared to last yer, TD5 has more of everything: cars, tracks, physics, animations, etc. It's even running in high-res. It's all very nice. Pitbull did a great job of improving this unique racing title. I only wish they would've tweaked the racing gameplay a bit more. On one hand, it's very fast and smooth with really good speed emulation. It actually looks like you're going fast when the speedometer says you are. Surprisingly that's something a lot of racing games screw up. So that's all fine, but while it's fun to go fast—it's way too hard to go fast, control the car, AND keep up with the AI opponents. Often, a dip or bump in the road will send you flying or spinning out, putting you out of the race instantly. Momentum killers is what they are. And too many of them exist in the game. It's just too frustrating to play in the Cup event when every race must be run flawlessly to place in the top 3. At least in the single race option you can adjust your car to the course. Strangely this isn't an option in the Cup races!? I had the most fun just trying to improve my times in Time Trial Mode. **Overall, I'd still rather mess around with TD5 than about 75 percent of the PS racers out there.** After all, what other title offers such a cool mix of cars? When the gameplay gets closer to NFS III, it'll be awesome. **Dean**

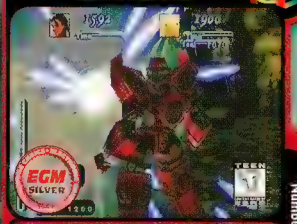
This is yet another contender for the "nice graphics, lots of cars, cool soundtrack" award, and it does an admirable job. It's fast and smooth, it controls nicely (sliding the RWD cars is spot-on) and it has some of my favorite bands playing the tunes. **The racing itself can be a bit dull though.** The pack rarely holds together, so pitching a '98 'vette against a '70s brute is more academic than "old school" wheel-to wheel racing. **John D**

Test Drive 5 is no Gran Turismo, but it's still a **very solid racer and a definite improvement over TD4**. The graphics are sweet—all of the tracks are beautifully designed (especially the later ones), and the action is fast and fluid, even in split-screen races. Control is a little bit on the sensitive side though, and the CPU racers are way too skillful in the Cup Races, which can make things frustrating. It's perfect for arcade-style racing fans. **John R**

I'm impressed with the graphical effects added to Test Drive 5 but I can't say it's really *that* improved over Test Drive 4. **It suffers from the same problems as before:** unsightly pop-up in some of the tracks, loose control for the most part and AI opponents that clear the finish line long before you just because you spin out one time. It may have a kick-ass soundtrack, decent visuals and a nice selection of cars but it's no Gran Turismo. **Shawn**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	
8	8	7	7

XENOGEARS



EGM SILVER

Publisher: Square EA

Developer: Square Co., Ltd.

Featured In: *EGM* #111

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Great Story

Worst Feature: Battles Get Repetitive

www.squaresoft.com

There are big games, there are huge games and then there's Xenogears. If you've ever hankered after something that's really going to eat into a seriously sizeable chunk of your life, this is the game for you. There's a good deal more than 60 hours' worth of gameplay here...it's considerably larger than Final Fantasy VII and easily one of the most sprawling and contentious games yet on the PlayStation. In underlying theme it shares a lot with FFVII. A tortured soul makes a group of friends, wanders a land that's a novel blend of old-school swords and sorcery with super-modern technology, and gets into fights (maybe too often). The similarities don't end there—**much like Square's previous epic it is rich in story and character development, but unnervingly linear when you sit back and really think about it**. That said though, the tale it weaves is full of intrigue, action and most importantly—some genuinely exciting and different themes. Without giving the game away, much of the story deals with religion and the way it is handled is simply beautiful. Presentation is up to the usual Square standard too, with cinemas and 3D environments only et down by the quality of some of the sprites. It may be for the hardcore RPGer, but the story's so good you'll want to get through it. **John D**

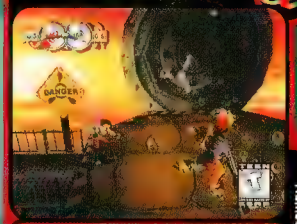
Xenogears is a different kind of RPG for Square—and not just for its anime flavor or unique combat system. This is Square's most story-dr ven game to date (yep, more so than FFVII). You spend as much time watching cinemas (most of which use the slick in-game engine) as you do playing. It makes for **a long adventure that takes a while to get into.** Yet once all the plot pieces fit, you'll find one of the greatest RPG stories of all time. **Crispin**

Nothing is more important to me in an RPG than the story. A good story can make up for even the worst gameplay most of the time. Fortunately, in Xenogears' case, it only serves to add to **an already great-playing game that not only looks beautiful, but sounds it as well** (what a soundtrack!). Fights take place a little too frequently, and some of the writing quality is weak, but otherwise I have no complaints. A fantastic game. **John R**

There's nothing like a long, long RPG to keep me up all night for weeks. Xenogears sports some of the slickest animation cinemas I've seen, m xing CG objects with traditional cell work. The story is just plain cool, with morally deep topics discussed, and **the battles are no cake walks with lots of techniques to learn and master**. Being able to rotate the world is great, but I wasn't too keen on the slightly muddy graphics. **Sushi**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	9	8	6

WILD 9



EGM SILVER

Publisher: Interplay

Developer: Shiny

Featured In: *EGM* #110

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Torturing Thy Enemies

Worst Feature: Too Hard To Get Continues

www.interplay.com

Like Shiny's other famous side-scroller, Earthworm Jim, Wild 9 is full of fresh ideas and very solid gameplay. Upon playing Wild 9 for the first time, everything seems to indicate that this is a fantastic product. The graphics are among the best in the 2.5D side-scrolling genre, the multipurpose rig is an incredibly innovative idea and the game even makes your Dual Shock vibrate in all the perfect places (don't read too much into that...). But after a while, the excitement dies down a bit when you look at some of the game's faults. For example, some parts are tough to navigate (hard to make jumps, almost impossible to reach areas, etc.). Also, it's very difficult to get the 99 Gears you need to earn a free continue. You pretty much have to find every single gear in each stage—miss one and the whole thing is for naught (finishing a level with 98 Gears doesn't give you crap). So even though Wild 9 has plenty of checkpoints (some of which are cleverly hidden), not having enough continues means you're in for some frustrating games. **But what makes Wild 9 so memorable, and well worth checking out, is its sadistic side.** Torturing enemies may seem like pointless violence, but it actually plays a necessary part in this game's design. Fun, solid and innovative. Give Wild 9 a try. **Dan**

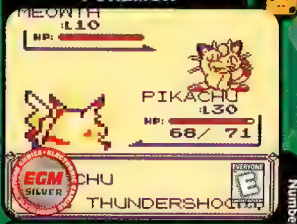
Dave Perry's long-awaited title is here...and it's worth the wait. Wild 9 gets going real fast, with good visuals and sound. The control is OK, which is important for a game like this, but it gets a little frustrating trying to control the rig and yourself at the same time. Also, trying to find 99 Gears in order to earn a continue can be a chore. Wild 9 is a good game, and you should at least rent it. **By the way, torturing your enemies is damn cool.** **Jay**

Wild 9 is a hell of a lot of fun. It's a bit linear in some areas but overall I had a blast playing it. **The torture element certainly is original, and helped me relieve a portion of my deadline stress.** Actually, the whole game is quite original. The PlayStation needs more games like Wild 9, since it combines solid old-school side-scroller elements with excellent new-school graphics. Note: The voice in it is lame. Still, it's one to look into. **Shawn**

This is a surprisingly playable platform game that actually makes a bold step...it has some original ideas. The whole concept of picking up the bad guys and torturing them by throwing them into grinders, blenders and other such nastiness adds some real humor to the proceedings. I'm not a particularly big fan of the graphics, but the animation on all of the characters is exceptional. **A nice change from the usual 3D crap these days.** **John D**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	8	6

POKÉMON



EGM SILVER

Publisher: Nintendo

Developer: Nintendo/Creatures/Game Freak

Featured In: *EGM* #112

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Incredibly Addictive Play

Worst Feature: The RPG Part Is Pretty Straightforward

www.pokemon.com

When a game sells over 9 million copies in Japan, you know the developers had to have done something right. Play Pokémon for a few hours and you'll begin to understand. No matter how much I try to write it off as "just another wacky Japanese fad," I can't. Heck, I can't even put the game down, much less write it off. If you're the perfectionist type (like me), Pokémon has your name written all over it. Collecting monsters, then building them up, trading them, evolving them and so on is just ridiculously addictive, and it'll keep you occupied for weeks. Getting into the game is simple for even the most novice game players, yet trying to build a complete collection of all 150 Pokémon is nearly impossible, even for the best of the best. **This is, in my opinion, the definition of masterful game design.** Sure, the one-player game is pretty darn easy (and rather linear, too), and some of the text is kinda hokey (gotta love when Ash "rubs" the Captain to make him feel better), but on the whole you won't even care, because the core part of the game (collecting and battling monsters) is just too much fun. With the Game Boy Color right around the corner, and the holiday season about to hit, there's no better time to dive into this little gem. Just be prepared to sacrifice many, many hours. **John R**

When you first start Pokémon, this cutesy game almost seems a chore—especially if you're not into the combat aspect of most RPGs. You spend a lot of time at the outset fighting other Pokémon over and over again. But once you assemble a decent collection of critters, the game gets downright addicting. **Combat becomes surprisingly strategic.** Yet it's swapping and fighting with other human players that's the real draw here. **Crispin**

Fifty squillion Japanese people surely can't be wrong, can they? **Think of Pokémon as a truly social experience—something that's as much of a hobby as it is a game,** and you'll find that the simple play mechanics aren't a problem. You'll soon feel attached to your Pokémon, talking about them with disturbing affection. Playing becomes a weird habit that you turn back to whenever you have a spare moment. I think I feel weird. **John D**

At first, Pokémon may seem like it's made for kids, but once you get into it, I guarantee you'll be hooked no matter how old you are. There's so much depth to Pokémon, **even I—a notorious non-fan of the Game Boy—am impressed**. Gameplay is perfectly balanced and incredibly addictive—you can spend hours fighting, training, trading, etc. before even getting into the story! One of the most clever, innovative GB games ever. **Sushi**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	6	9	10

Review Crew Archive

From EGM 106 - 112

6 months of opinions for the minions

Game Boy
N64
PlayStation
Saturn

	Game	Publisher	Best Feature	Worst Feature	Scores			
Game Boy	Bomberman GB	Nintendo	Battle Mode with SGB	Repetitious Story Mode	8.5	6.5	7.5	7
	Legend of the River King	Natsume	Lots of Fishing Options	Dull Gameplay	4	4	4	2
	Mystical Ninja	Konami	Goemon Characters	Primitive Design	3.5	3.5	3	5
	Game Boy Camera	Nintendo	Animation Program	Clunky Menu System	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5
Nintendo 64	1080° Snowboarding	Nintendo	Stunning Graphics	Very Tricky Control	9.5	8	7.5	8.5
	All-Star Baseball '99	Acclaim	Incredible Graphics	Minor Physics Problems, No Instant Replay	8	8	8.5	8
	Banjo-Kazooie	Nintendo	Lots of Objectives	Same Ol' Lame Ol' Rare Character Designs	9.5	9.5	9	9.5
	Bio F.R.E.A.K.S.	Midway	Bodily Dismemberment	Awkward Controls	4.5	6	5.5	4
	Body Harvest	Midway	Huge Assortment of Vehicles	Weak RPG Elements	8	9	8	8
	Bomberman Hero	Nintendo	Star Fox-esque Flying Levels	No Multiplayer Mode!!!	5	5.5	7	6
	Buck Bumble	Ubi Soft	Cool Explosions	Frustratingly Difficult Sometimes	7.5	6	6.5	6.5
	Bust-A-Move 2: A.E.	Acclaim	Arcade-Perfect	Looks a Little Dated	7	5.5	9	4.5
	Chopper Attack	Midway	Nice Explosions	It Just Ain't Fun	2.5	6	5.5	5.5
	Clay Fighter 63 1/3 Sculptor's Cut	Interplay (Rental Only)	The Humor	Clunky Control, Poor Animation	5.5	5	5.5	6.5
	Deadly Arts	Konami	You Don't Have to Play It	We Did	1.5	1	2	2.5
	F-1 World Grand Prix	Nintendo	Detailed Graphics	Inconsistent Frame-Rate	8	7.5	8.5	7
	F-Zero X	Nintendo	Intense Gameplay	Sparse Background Graphics	9	9	9	9
	Flying Dragon	Natsume	Ambitious Design	Appalling Controls	3.5	4	3	3
	Forsaken 64	Acclaim	Stunning Graphics	Not Enough Save Points	6	6.5	6	6.5
	Gex 64: Enter the Gecko	Midway	Lots of Levels	Annoying Camera	6	5.5	5	5.5
	GT64: Championship Edition	Ocean	Realistic Handling	Lack of Tracks	7.5	4	5.5	4.5
	Iggy's Reckin' Balls	Acclaim	Cool Level Design	Uninspired Character Designs	5.5	7.5	7	7
	IS Soccer '98	Konami	Incredible Control	Three- and Four-Player Games Get Confusing	9.5	9.5	8.5	9
	Knife Edge	Kemco	Dodging	Ho-Hum on the Excitement Meter	4.5	7	6.5	4
	Kobe B. In NBA Courtside	Nintendo	Computer AI	Unrealistic Play in the Paint	7.5	8.5	8	8.5
	Madden NFL 99	Electronic Arts	Excellent Graphics, Great AI	Frame-Rate is a Bit Lacking	9	9	8.5	8.5
	Mike Piazza's StrikeZone	GT Interactive	You Don't Have to Buy It	Just About Everything	2	3.5	2	3
	Mission: Impossible	Infogrames	Interesting Missions	The Cool Things Are Executed Poorly	6	6.5	5	5.5
	MLB Featuring Ken Griffey, Jr.	Nintendo	Responsive Control	Lacking in the Realism	6.5	7	8	7.5
	Mortal Kombat 4	Midway	Two-On-Two Combat	Cheap Combos	6.5	6.5	6.5	7.5
	Nascar 99	Electronic Arts	Competitive Gameplay	Engine Noise	8.5	5	7	7
	NFL Blitz	Midway	Great Arcade Translation	Strange Missed Passes	9	9	9.5	9
	NHL 99	Electronic Arts	Exciting Gameplay	Annoying Commentary	8	8	8	8
	Off-Road Challenge	Midway	Mindless Racing	Mindless Racing	5.5	3	4	5
	Quest 64	THQ	Graphics (Sometimes)	Dull, Simplistic Gameplay	3	4	3.5	4.5
	S.C.A.R.S.	Ubi Soft	Sweet Graphics	Race as a Rhino? Huh?	7	5	7	5
	Space Station Silicon Valley	Take 2 Interactive	Originality, Variety	Camera Work	8.5	8.5	8.5	8
	Virtual Chess 64	Titus	Tutorial Options	Battle-Chess Animations	6.5	7	5.5	6
	Waialae CC: True Golf Classics	Nintendo	Plenty of Options	Only One Course	6.5	5	5.5	4
	WCW/nWo Revenge	THQ	Graphics and Animation	All The Characters Control the Same	7.5	8.5	8.5	8
	Wetrix	Infogrames	Unique Gameplay	No Variety	5.5	5.5	6	5.5
	World Cup 98	Electronic Arts	Fantastic Graphics	Passing System	8	7	8	8
	WWF War Zone	Acclaim	Create-A-Wrestler	Poor Collision Detection	7.5	8	8.5	8
PlayStation	Adidas Power Soccer '98	Psygnosis	Loads of Teams	Game Mechanics	4.5	4.5	2	4.5
	AGH: Atari Collection 2	Midway	Four-Player Gauntlet	Weak Intro	7	6.5	6.5	7.5
	Armored Core: Project Phantasma	Ascii	Customization of ACs	Outdated Graphics	5	5	5.5	5.5
	Azure Dreams	Konami	Familiars	Starting Over at Level 1 Each Time	8	8	8	7
	Batman & Robin	Acclaim	Character Animation	Everything Else	3	2	2	2.5
	BIO F.R.E.A.K.S.	Midway	Squirty Blood	Sluggish Control	5.5	3.2	5	4
	Blasto	SCEA	Phil Hartman as Blasto	The Baaaaad Control	5	7.5	6.5	6.5
	Breath of Fire III	Capcom	Seemingly Never-Ending Quest	A Few Annoying Puzzles	8.5	8.5	7.5	8
	Brunswick Bowling	THQ	Parker Bohn III	Parker Bohn III	8	6	3	6
	C&C Red Alert Retaliation	Westwood Studios	New Units	Not Enough Improvements	8	8	8	8.5
	C: The Contra Adventure	Konami	Side-Scrolling Levels	Everything Else	3.5	4.5	2	3.5
	Cardinal Syn	SCEA	The Graphics	Unbalanced Characters and AI	4	5	3.5	3
	Circuit Breakers	Mindscape	Multiplayer Play	Sometimes AI is Almost TOO Good	8.5	8.5	8.5	8
	Colony Wars: Vengeance	Psygnosis	Innovative Missions	Extreme Difficulty	8	8.5	9	9
	Crime Killer	Interplay	Fast, Smooth Graphics	Apparent Lack of Enemy AI	4.5	5.5	5.5	4
	Deathtrap Dungeon	Eidos	Multiple Characters	Boring Gameplay	3.5	5	6.5	4.5
	Devil Dice	THQ	Totally Unique Gameplay	Trying to Make Time to Play More	9	9	9.5	8
	Einhänder	SCEA	Awesome Bosses	No Two-Player Mode	9.5	9	9.5	9
	Elemental Gearbolt	Working Designs	Fantastic Atmosphere	A Bit Short	8	8	8	8
	Forsaken	Acclaim	Incredible Graphics	Insanely Hard Enemies	6	6	4	6.5

	Fox Sports Golf '99	Fox Interactive	Brisk Gameplay	"Ugly, Unintuitive Menus"	5.5	5	4.5	5.5
	Fox Sports Soccer '99	Fox Interactive	Realistic Play	Control	8	6.5	6	5
	Future Cop: L.A.P.D.	Electronic Arts	Level Design, Gameplay	Repetitious Gameplay	7	6.5	7.5	7
	G. Darius	THQ	Ability to Capture Enemies	Some Slowdown	8.5	9	9	8.5
	Gran Turismo	SCEA	Just About Everything	Mostly Japanese Car Names and Models	9.5	9.5	9	9
	Grand Theft Auto	Take 2 Interactive	R-Rated Content	Graphics are a Bit Primitive	7.5	6.5	5	7
	Heart of Darkness	Tantrum/Interplay	Excellent Graphics and FMV	Tedious Puzzles and Control	8	2	7	7.5
	Hot Shots Golf	SCEA	Intuitive Gameplay	"Have to ""Unlock"" Additional Courses"	8.5	8.5	7.5	8.5
	IS Soccer Pro '98	Konami	Smooth Gameplay	Hokey Weather Effects	8	9	8	7.5
	Jeremy McGrath Supercross 98	Acclaim	Track Editor	Not Enough Bikes	7.5	6.5	5.5	6.5
	Jersey Devil	SCEA	Simple, Fun Gameplay	Everything Else	5	6	6	7
	Kagero: Deception II	Tecmo	Devilish Traps	Stupid Enemies	9	8	8.5	7.5
	Kartia	Atlus	Intuitive Strategy Engine	No Character Classes/Jobs	8.5	8.5	8	8
	Madden NFL 99	Electronic Arts	Unrivaled Realism	Frame-Rate is a Bit Slow Sometimes	9	9	8	8
	Master of Monsters	Ascii	Monster Fusing	"1-Bit Graphics, Sheer Monotony"	5	4.5	7	7
	Mega Man Legends	Capcom	Miniquests Aplenty	Control	6.5	5	7.5	6
	MLB 99	SCEA	Excellent Control	Too Many Homers!	8	8	7.5	7.5
	MLBPA Bot. of the 9th '99	Konami	Fast Gameplay	Weak Presentation	7	6	7.5	8
	Mortal Kombat 4	Midway	Nice Graphics	Tired Gameplay	6	6.5	6	6
	Moto Racer 2	Electronic Arts	Track Editor	Still No CPU Racers in Two-Player Mode	8.5	8.5	8	7
	Motorhead	Fox Interactive	Game Speed	Stiff Gameplay	6	5	6.5	5
	N2O: Nitrous Oxide	Fox Interactive	Twitch Gameplay	Repetitive Levels	5.5	6.5	7	7
	Nascar 99	Electronic Arts	Loads of Features and Options	Disappointing Gameplay	7	5	6.5	5
	NCAA Football 99	Electronic Arts	Incredible Depth	Occasional Drop in Frame-Rate	9	8.5	9	8
	NFL Blitz	Midway	It's Blitz	Sometimes Choppy Frame-Rate	8.5	8.5	9	8.5
	NFL GameDay 99	989 Studios	Great Graphics, Improved AI	Disappointing Multiplayer Play	9.5	8	8	8.5
	NFL Xtreme	SCEA	Very Customizable	Sluggish Gameplay	4	6	4.5	3.5
	Parasite Eve	Square/EA	Cool Story	Too Short	7	8	8	8.5
	Pitfall 3D	Activision	Voice-Overs	Cheap Gameplay	2	4	4	7
	Pocket Fighter	Capcom	Gems and Silly-Ass Combos	Tap-Tap Combos	7	7.5	8	7
	Powerboat Racing	VR Sports	Wobbly Water	The Gameplay and Graphics	2	4.5	4	4
	Pro Pinball: Timeshock	Empire Interactive	Solid Gameplay	Not Enough Variety	4.5	5	3	2.5
	Rascal	Psygnosis	Nice Graphics	Camera Angles and Crappy Controls	4	3.5	3	4
	Resident Evil 2: Dual Shock	Capcom	Extreme Battle Mode	Mostly Rehash	7	7.5	9	8.5
	Risk	Hasbro Interactive	Classic Risk	Ultimate Risk Spoils the Game	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5
	Rival Schools UBF	Capcom	Watching Tiffany Do Her Team-Up On Kyoko	No Create-a-Fighter	8	8.5	9	8.5
	Road Rash 3D	Electronic Arts	Fast-Paced Gameplay	Nothing Much New Here	7.5	8.5	7.5	7.5
	Rogue Trip	GT Interactive	Familiar Twisted Metal Feel	Graphics are a Little Rough	9	8.5	9	8
	Rollaway (Formerly Kula World)	Psygnosis	Interesting Levels	No 2P Simultaneous Play	7.5	6.5	7	7
	Rosco McQueen	Psygnosis	Umm...	Poor Control, Repetitive Gameplay	2	4	4.5	5
	S.C.A.R.S.	Ubi Soft	Great Graphics	Boring Gameplay	5.5	7.5	7	6
	San Francisco Rush	Midway	Two-Player Link Option	Feels Rushed	5	4	4	4
	Sentinel Returns	Psygnosis	Lots of Gameplay	Repetitive Gameplay	5	4	6.5	8.5
	Spice World	Psygnosis	Um...Spice Girls?	Um...Spice Girls?	6	1.5	2	4
	Spyro The Dragon	SCEA	Slick Graphics	Lame Bosses	8.5	8	9	8
	Tales of Destiny	Namco	Great Dialogue, Tough Dungeons	16-Bit-looking Graphics	8.5	8	8	8
	Team Losi RC Racer	Fox Interactive	Analog Control	Poor Graphics and Frams-Rate	5	4.5	4	4
	Tekken 3	Namco	Perfect Gameplay	None, Really	10	10	10	9
	Tenchu: Stealth Assassins	Activision	Stealth Action	Bad Camera	7.5	8	8	7.5
	The Granstream Saga	THQ	Innovative Battle System	Simplistic Design	7	7	7.5	7
	The Unholy War	Eidos/Crystal Dynamics	Two-Player Game	Unbalanced Characters	8	9	7.5	6.5
	Theme Hospital	Electronic Arts	The Game is Cute	Too Repetitive	6	6	6.5	6.5
	Thunder Force V	Working Designs/SPAZ	Challenging Gameplay	No Two-Player Mode	7.5	7	8	7.5
	TOCA Touring Car Champ.	3DO	Controls Feel Excellent	Not Strictly Relevant in the United States	8.5	8	7	7
	Tomba!	SCEA	Lots of Variety	Easy to Get Lost	9	8.5	8.5	9
	Trap Gunner	Atlus	Original Gameplay	Presentation is a Bit Dubious	7	6	5	5
	Turbo Prop Racing	SCEA	Sensation of Speed	Some Courses are Lame	6.5	4.5	5	4.5
	Vigilante 8	Activision	Ingenious Level Design	Poor Weapon Design	7.5	7	8	9
	VR Baseball '99	Interplay	Realistic Gameplay	Too Many HRs, No Create-a-Player	7.5	7	7	7
	Wargames: Defcon 1	MGM Interactive	Number of Vehicles	Repetitive Gameplay	7	7.5	7	7
	Warhammer: Dark Omen	Electronic Arts	3D Terrain	Can Get a Bit Slow	6	4.5	5.5	5
	World Cup 98	Electronic Arts	Slightly Improved Features	Frame-Rate	7	6.5	8	8
	WWF War Zone	Acclaim	Create-a-Wrestler	Poor Collision Detection	8.5	8	7.5	7.5
	X-Games: Pro Boarder	Radical Entertainment	ESPN License	Klunky Graphics Engine	5.5	5	5	6.5
	X-Men vs. Street Fighter	Capcom	Lots of Fighters	Whaddya Think? No Tag Team!	5.5	4	6	3
	Burning Rangers	Sega of America	Deep Gameplay	Too Short	7.5	8.5	6.5	7.5
	Panzer Dragoon Saga	Sega of America	The Battle System	Too Short	9.5	9.5	9.5	10
	Shining Force	Sega of America	Great Story	Where are Scenarios 2 & 3?	9	8.5	9	9
	The House of the Dead	Sega of America	Branching Paths	Horrid Graphics	6.5	7	7	5

Saturn

Reader Reviews

PlayStation Game Boy Nintendo 64 Saturn

Here's your chance to vent your views on recently released games. If you have something you think needs to be said about either one of our reviews, or a game you've recently bought - email us your thoughts at reviewcrew@zd.com or write to us at the following address: EGM Reader Reviews, 1920 Highland Ave., #222 Lombard, IL 60148

Banjo-Kazooie

What we said:

"Banjo is the best 3D action/adventure game to date....The game is bigger and better-looking than Mario 64....The sense of enormous scale is incredible...you'll spend a long time lost in B-K's world if you want to perfect each level. But you'll spend time fighting the camera too....Banjo is a tough character to actually care about."

How we rated it:

9.5 9.5 9.0 9.5

What you said:

This game will set the standard for 3D action/adventure games across the board. The depth of the game is astounding and the sound and graphics are right on cue. This game was rated really well and deserves it.

Jon_F_Longsdorf@Mail.BankOne.Com

How can you dis a game based on not liking the character? Banjo-Kazooie is a fantastic game.

(name and address withheld)

Banjo Kazooie is clearly one of the "next generation" of N64 titles—games that are really pushing the machine to its limits. The stunning graphics and quirky sounds combine to produce a brilliant platform romp that will keep you entertained for hours. The difficulty level is also set at a more sensible level—all too many N64 games have been far too easy or far too short (look at Quest 64, Goemon or Mission: Impossible) but this is much more challenging...which is a good thing (unless you're crap at platform games). All in all, pretty damn good.

pierre@neotech.freeserve.co.uk

Bomberman Hero

What we said:

"Bomberman isn't really known for being a magnificent one-player game, so why make a game focusing on just that? Bomberman Hero is fantastic, as long as you haven't hit puberty yet....Overall this game is a major disappointment...there's just one key thing missing—where's the multiplayer play?"

How we rated it:

5.0 5.5 7.0 6.0

What you said:

What's this? A Bomberman without multiplayer? Even the regular one on the N64 would suffice. Anyway, the challenge was [dummied] down, compared to Bomberman 64. It's a better one-player game than its predecessor but it can't compare with Mario or Banjo. If you can spare a couple bucks and have finished Mario and Banjo, rent it.

unakev@hotmail.com

Mission: Impossible

What we said:

"Yes, the game's quite a disappointment...Mission: Impossible is simply too tedious for its own good."

How we rated it:

6.0 6.5 5.0 5.5

What you said:

This is definitely a "rent before you buy." It was talked about ever since the N64 was introduced and was a big letdown. The concepts are great, but the puzzles are sometimes too perplexing. I would be very wary about picking this one up. I thought the *EGM* ratings were on target.

Jon_F_Longsdorf@Mail.BankOne.Com

Too easy. Too short. Dull.

pierre@neotech.freeserve.co.uk

Devil Dice

What we said:

"Devil Dice has lots of originality...as a multiplayer game it's relationship-threateningly competitive....If you're disappointed with the mindless games on the market, please check out Devil Dice."

How we rated it:

9.0 9.0 9.5 8.0

What you said:

I rented this game to see what it would be like. I am already having withdrawal symptoms. A true puzzle game that makes your veins yearn for more. Definite buy.

Soulcry19@aol.com

Oh my god. What an amazing game!

(name and address withheld)

Heart of Darkness

What we said:

"I beat the game and felt unsatisfied...more a work of art than a game...[you'll] need patience to enjoy HOD. Be ready to die a lot, although you can still beat it in a weekend."

How we rated it:

8.0 2.0 7.0 7.5

What you said:

Yes! Finally a game that makes me want to play for hours and hours until I get it right. Brings back summer days playing Out of This World and throwing my controller in pure frustration and anger. It's true that the gameplay can be quite annoying and repetitive, but in retrospect it makes you remember the game a lot more.

Soulcry19@aol.com

I'm with Johnny England on this one. It's so frustrating! It may play like Flashback and games from that era, but who cares? Who wants to keep getting killed every five seconds? Where's the fun in that?

sixth-sense@geocities.com

Parasite Eve

What we said:

"It's quite obviously Square giving Resident Evil a respectful nod....As far as RPGs go, Parasite Eve is fairly simple...but the story which starts out good, gets a bit weird and convoluted toward the end...gorgeous graphics... repetitive combat..."

How we rated it:

7.0 8.0 8.0 8.5

What you said:

It's true that Square can make outstanding RPGs. But the only things outstanding in PE are the CGs and the battle scenes. Having the option to modify a weapon is really cool, but it could have been done a lot better. Anyone can make a game with plenty of eye-candy, but it just doesn't hold up to that Square trait of overall fun and playability. I really liked the way that you could move around during battles. I don't know why it hasn't been done that much in RPGs but it makes the game a little more realistic. PE 2 will be a classic.

Soulcry19@aol.com

After playing Parasite Eve for a couple hours, I had to admit to myself that I was officially disappointed. The battle system was great; unlike anything I had ever seen before. But the game was too short, which led to a seemingly rushed story line.

station820@hotmail.com

The battle system is unique in that you are able to move around like in Quest 64 (except it's fun). The visuals are top-notch and the CG scenes are the best in any videogame I've ever seen. The only flaw in the visuals is that the characters should have been more detailed. The replay factor is good, but only because of the EX Mode. The regular mode took me around eight hours to beat. But the EX Mode is good because you need to beat 85 percent of the game again in order to be powerful enough to beat the Chrysler Building. It is worth it though because you get another ending. My last complaint about it is that it should be rated Teen, not Mature. Wow, it mentions sperm and has a very small amount of blood. Big deal. I hope Square makes a sequel with six days each about 15 hours long. Oh ya.

ANTVGMXG@aol.com

Tenchu

What we said:

"Tenchu has ninjas acting in a more realistic way than any previous videogame efforts....The game is a lot of fun to play and has great atmosphere....The camera gets to be so @&#$ing frustrating in tight spots."

How we rated it:

7.5 8.0 8.0 7.5

What you said:

I am writing in response to your Tenchu review. Because normally your reviews are very accurate, I was surprised to hear your complaints about Tenchu's camera problems. I own Tenchu and I think it has no camera problems whatsoever.

al_7@hotmail.com

You were right about those voices, jeez they suck the drama right out of the whole thing don't they? Also that camera sucks big-time especially when you're locked in a corner.

sixth-sense@geocities.com

Great game, great game, great game, the camera angles can suck sometimes, and the graphics can be kind of rough, but it really deserves a silver rating! The music and atmosphere really transport you to 16th-century Japan! I didn't know how much fun it was to be sneaky! For the "true gamer" this is a must-buy!

zionwarrior_99@yahoo.com

Win a trip...

to any WCW event of your choice to meet the hottest stars in wrestling!

Sweepstakes Rules

1. No purchase necessary: To enter, send a standard-size postcard containing name,address and phone number to "WCW Revenge Sweepstakes," 5016 North Parkway Calabasas, Suite 100, Calabasas, CA 91302. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. All entries must be handwritten. Mechanically reproduced entries will not be accepted. Entries must be received by December 29, 1998. All entries become exclusive property of THQ, Inc. and will not be acknowledged or returned. Sponsor assumes no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage due or misdirected entries. Only one prize per family, organization or household. Upon entering the WCW Revenge Contest, you agree to abide by and be subject to to these Rules and Regulations.

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Revenge for Playstation, and WCW NWO Revenge T-shirt

2nd Prize

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3rd Prize

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WCW NWO Revenge T-shirt

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Send your name, address, and telephone number on a postcard to:

"WCW Revenge Sweepstakes"
5016 North Parkway Calabasas, Suite 100,
Calabasas,CA 91302.

Entries must be received by: December 29, 1998.

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JUMP START

Strategies To Get You Started On The Hottest Games

See *Expert Gamer* issue #53 for the complete walk-through!

EXPERT GAMER™

Metal Gear Solid

By XG's Jim Mazurek

During the brief but grueling mission to infiltrate the base on Shadow Moses Island, Snake will find many intriguing secrets. Some of them are more fun than others to fiddle with, but they all deserve some recognition! Below you will find a compilation of secrets and tactics that will surely make your gaming experience more enjoyable!

Snake's Techniques

Snake has a few important techniques that will make your mission much easier.

1. Run-and-Shoot Technique: Press the Crawl button while you are pressing the Weapon button, then just point in the direction that you want to Run'n Shoot!

2. Peeking:
Press the R1 button while in First-person View Mode to step to the right, and L1 button to step to the left. This is great for peeking around corners.

3. Strangling:
Press the Weapon button (without pressing the Directional button) close to an enemy. If you have no weapons equipped, you can break the enemy's neck by repeatedly pressing the Weapon button 11 times once you have him grappled.

4. Laser-Aiming Module
Your laser will automatically track onto the nearest enemy when drawn. You do have to be in range though, it's usually about 3/4 of a screen distance.

5. Take Out the Cameras
Later in the game, you'll get the Nikita Launcher, which is great for taking out Cameras or Remote Guns. If a camera's giving you a lot of trouble, take it out!

Messin' With Meryl!

Messin' with Meryl
When you encounter Meryl, it's actually kinda funny to see all the stuff you can do to her. Punch her, throw her, choke her, shoot her, blow her up and even hide in the cardboard box from her! Don't expect to get away unscathed...
Also, for something ultra-hysterical, try staring at her in First-person View Mode for a few seconds.

Other Cool stuff!

- Strap C4 to the Infantry's back! Bye bye!
- In the Blast Furnace level, throw the guards into the molten steel over the railing! Watch 'em burn!
- Equip the FAMAS and shoot all but your last three bullets. Now, throw on your Bandanna, and you'll have unlimited tracers! It's like having a freakin' laser!
- Smoke your cigarettes and get Naomi's speech about the surgeon general's warning.
- Equip the cardboard boxes in the backs of the APCs. Use them to warp from one area to another. Make sure to use a different box than the truck you're currently in for it to work.
- Knock on the locker that Otacon's hiding in during the fight with the Ninja!
- Talk to Nastasha after every new item you pick up; she has some cool stuff to say.

More Secrets...

Showin' her Skivvies
If the time from when you enter the bathroom and get to the last stall is under five seconds, you'll see Meryl in a slightly different outfit...

Is that a PlayStation I see?
Why yes it is! It's located in the room where you fight the Ninja, on the center table. Was Otacon playing games while he should have been working?

Fighting Mantis, The Alternative Way?
After Campbell tells you to switch controller ports, don't do it. There is actually an alternative way to beat him! Call Campbell again, and he'll tell you to attack the statues on the sides of his room. Once you break the statues, attack him as normal, except you don't have to change controller ports!

Get Campbell Ticked!
(1.) Are the ravens outside Vulcan's lair getting you angry? Take 'em out with the PSG-1! Listen to Campbell's reaction afterward...
(2.) Kill the rats with your PSG-1 above Sniper Wolf in the Comms Tower, listen to Campbell rant about you wasting time...

Lil' Wolfies
Sometimes, you'll see a heart insignia over the wolves' heads. What does this represent? They can smell Sniper Wolf's scarf on you.

Hottie action!
Wanna flirt with Mei Ling? Just call her five or six consecutive times and pick the option not to save. She'll begin to blush, say some interesting text, then smile at you. The sixth time she'll even stick her tongue out at ya!

Meryl/Psycho Cam?
Just before you fight Psycho Mantis, go into first person view mode and check out a profile of yourself through Meryl's eyes! It also works with Psycho during the actual battle with him. Creepy...

Psycho Mantis
When fighting Psycho Mantis, you'll notice him say he'll "read deeper into your soul." When he does this, he's really searching your memory card for Konami saved games! Castlevania, Suikoden, Azure Dreams, IS Soccer and more!

Phantom Pictures?

So far, we've confirmed 10 "Phantom pictures" with the camera. If you look closely in the frame, you'll see ghosted images of the game developers superimposed on the photo. I have no idea what the photos are for, but they sure are creepy. There are rumored to be a total of 43 Phantom pictures, but we've only confirmed these 10 so far: (1.) The guard in the bathroom peeing. (2.) The yellow guard who's still twitching in the Ninja's hallway of destruction. (3.) The body of the DARPA chief in the cell. (4) The Policenauts poster in the room where you meet Otacon. (5.) The mirrors in the women's restroom. (6.) The world map in the PAL key room. (7.) The waterfall just before Metal Gear Rex. (8.) The sleeping guard in the Heliport, standing to the left. That's all we've found so far! Stay tuned for an update next month! (9.) President Baker's dead body. (10.) The picture in Psycho Mantis' room, north wall.

Ultra Secrets!

Red Ninja?

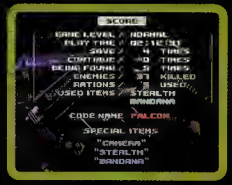
So you've seen the red ninja have you? What on earth does it mean? The third time through the game (if you use both of your previous save data), you'll encounter a weird Spider Man-looking Ninja. Also, take a look at your save icon on the memory card. It shows the red ninja...

Bond/Snake?

After beating the game twice, you'll get Solid Snake in a tuxedo! This little secret has been left out of the Japanese version and was put in the U.S. version only! Long live GoldenEye!

Frequency Table

The Ratings...



Here are the things they rate you on at the end of the game:
Time to Complete
# of Saves
# of Continues
# of Times Found
# of Enemies Killed
# of Rations Used
Special Items Used
If you're shooting for the best rating, Big Boss, it seems as if the "lower" the number the better. Kill under 25 enemies, eat one ration or less, get detected less than four times, use no continues and finish the game in under three hours. Depending on which difficulty you play the game on (Easy, Normal, Hard and Extreme), the rankings will differ. There are 12 tiers of rankings each with four rankings.

Unlocking Metal Gear Solid

There are so many modes in Metal Gear Solid, that I actually found it best to list them in a chart. First comes the name of the mode, followed by what it is and how to get it. Good Luck!

Time Attack Mode: VR training with timed goals; beat all 10 VR levels to get it.
Gun Shooting Mode: VR training with the SOCOM; beat all 10 Time Attack levels to get it.
Survival Mode: All 10 Gun Shooting levels combined into one huge level; beat all 10 Gun Shooting levels to get it.
Technical Data Mode: Computer Wizard runs through and shows you how to beat all the Gun Shooting levels; beat Survival Mode to get it.
Extreme Mode: Takes the normal game and makes it unbelievably hard. No radar, less rations, less ammo, and tougher enemies. Beat the game once on any difficulty setting to get it.
Photo Album Mode: A photo editor where you can save and edit your pictures taken with the Camera. To get it, find the Camera.
Demo Theater Mode: Allows you to go through and view all the game's cinemas. To get it, you'll have to beat the game on any difficulty setting. There are two "Rolls." Roll A is Meryl's Ending, and Roll B is Otacon's ending.

The "Special" Items

Camera: The camera is found in the Armory, back through the bottom passage where you fight Ocelot. It's behind a level 6 door, so you'll have to backtrack for it. It allows you to take snapshots and create a photo album of in-game action.

Bandanna: This item is received if you get the good ending, by not submitting in Ocelot's Torture Room. Meryl will give it to you at the end. The Bandanna gives you unlimited ammo, grenades and bullets.

Stealth: If you do submit to Ocelot's torture, you'll get the Stealth Camo from Otacon. Probably the coolest item in the game, the Stealth Camo makes you completely invisible to all regular enemies. It doesn't work on Bosses or cinema battles though.

By XG's Scott Augustyn

Flying with a Vengeance

Weapon cycling When you first start a mission you should scroll through your weapons to find out what you have. This is very important to know when you come across the larger targets. The technique is this: When firing your weapon wait until it is just about to overheat then quickly switch to the next weapon.

Reverse thruster Press reverse thrust (L1) to turn faster during combat. You can also use reverse thrust to initiate power slides—simply fire your afterburners, then press L1 while turning. This technique allows you to "slide" along the sides of battleships while peppering their hulls with laser fire.

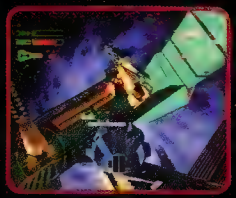
Mine "decoy" When you get the missile warning on your display, drop a mine "decoy" by pressing L2, R2 and then Square simultaneously. This will usually keep the missile off of your fighter's back.

Velocity sight This one's mentioned in the manual, but it's so important, it merits repeating—use your velocity sight! It is vitally important that you learn to lead your targets. The quick-moving fighters can dodge with the best of them and it is important to use your velocity sight to score successful hits. When you are lined up dead-on for a hit the sight will turn into a red X.

See *Expert Gamer* issue #53 for the complete walk-through!

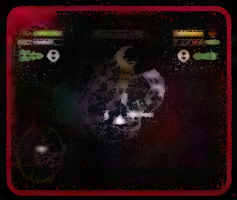
EXPERT GAMER

What's a Sentinel?



The Construction Rig

This is the first Sentinel you will fight. The Sentinels are gigantic weapons that cannot be defeated like normal ships. To defeat them you must destroy key weak points and then it will be possible to destroy the ship as a whole. For the rig you will first need to destroy the construction arms. Once they have been destroyed you can destroy the bridge.



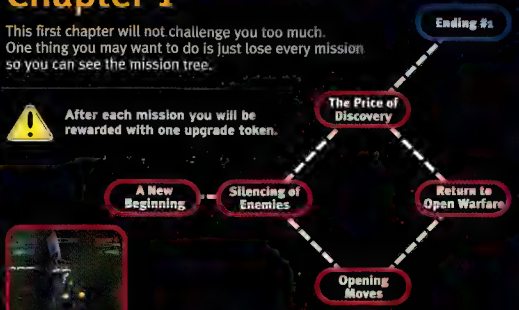
The other Sentinels you will fight will come in the form of super-weapons. There is usually only one per "chapter" and although they may be tough, they are not impossible. The super gun shown on the far left can be destroyed by shooting open the reactor door and flying in, while the spider mech must be shot in the abdomen when it rears up to fire.

Mission Tree

Chapter 1

This first chapter will not challenge you too much. One thing you may want to do is just lose every mission so you can see the mission tree.

After each mission you will be rewarded with one upgrade token.

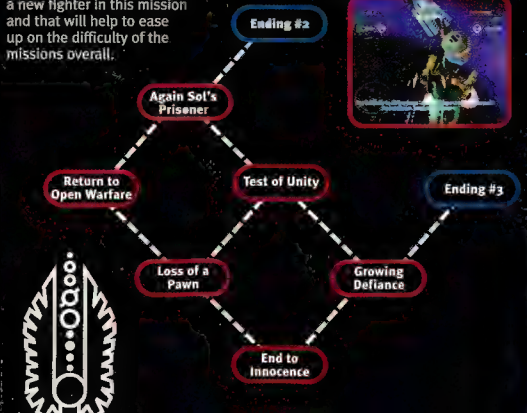


Chapter 2

The second chapter is where the game really starts to heat up. The missions get harder, the story gets deeper, and the enemies get more guns. You will also get a new fighter in this mission and that will help to ease up on the difficulty of the missions overall.

After each mission you will be rewarded with two upgrade tokens.

When starting this chapter you will be given a new ship, the Wraith.



The Navy's Fighter Complement

HEX

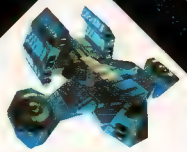
Afterburner	2.5 / 3.5
Engine	300 / 390
Gyro	512 / 768
Shields	100 / 140

This fighter is your only option in the beginning of the game. Don't use tech points to upgrade this fighter, hold onto them instead and upgrade your later fighters.

DIABLO

Afterburner	2.5 / 4.5
Engine	449 / 717
Gyro	1024 / 1280
Shields	150 / 270

The second ship and another improvement in your firepower and ability. This ship is acquired in the third "chapter" of missions.



SPOOK

Afterburner	2.5 / ---
Engine	449 / ---
Gyro	768 / ---
Shields	150 / ---

This is the ship you are assigned for ground-based missions. It is slow and has a small turn-rate but carries heavy firepower.

WRAITH

This is the first new ship you will get as you progress through the game. This will be given to you when you reach the second "chapter" of missions. It is an obvious improvement over the Hex.

Afterburner	2.5 / 4.0
Engine	345 / 501
Gyro	768 / 1024
Shields	125 / 200

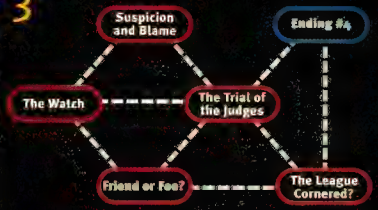
VOODOO

A captured alien ship. Once you reach the fourth "chapter" of missions you will get access to this ship. The strongest fighter in the Navy.

Afterburner	2.5 / 5.0
Engine	650 / 815
Gyro	1280 / 1536
Shields	175 / 360

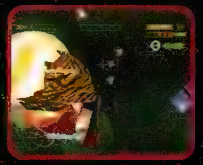
Chapter 3

This third "chapter" of mission ups the difficulty even more, but once you start getting past some of the missions you will definitely be over the hump of the game. Only a couple of missions should really give you any trouble.



After each mission you will be rewarded with three upgrade tokens.

When starting this chapter you will be given a new ship, the Diablo.

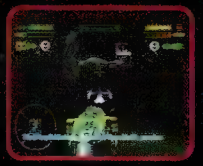


Chapter 4

The fourth and final chapter. The last few missions are the hardest. Although the fifth ending is good, if you try hard enough and get the sixth ending, the entire mission tree will be opened up.

After each mission you will be rewarded with three upgrade tokens.

When starting this chapter you will be given a new ship, the Voodoo.



tricks of the Trade

Trickman Terry Gives a "Thumbs Up" for His Readers!

Well, Terry is in a good mood this month. With his Christmas shopping all done, new games to play and a plethora of tricks to keep him busy, Trickman's brain is occupied and happy enough (for once)! Also, the Trickmeister is playing Metal Gear Solid and F-Zero X like they're going out of style! Check out the new Top 20 Tricks to get all the hottest codes for the games that people are playing now! Keep sending in your best tricks, codes and secrets to:

Tricks of the Trade 1920 Highland Avenue, #222 Lombard, IL 60148 or send e-mail to: tricks@zd.com

trick of the month

Iggy's Reckin' Balls (n64)

All Tracks and Balls

These codes will get you all the tracks and balls without beating the game! On the Title Screen, hold the Z button and then press the top R button. The "Enter Cheat" Screen will appear. Now enter the following codes for the results as shown:

THEUNIVERSE - Opens up all the tracks.
HAPPYHEADS - All balls open (except Iggy's girlfriend).

Joey Castillo
Duluth, GA

Win Games and Accessories for your Tricks!

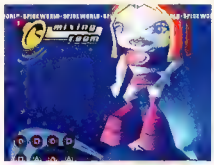
If your trick is selected as the Trick of the Month, you will win a free GameShark provided by the kind people at InterAct. If you are given credit for submitting a hot trick in this section, you will win a free page 281, so you can get all the details on the free stuff.

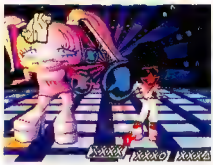
NOTE: If you send your trick by e-mail you must include your real name, address, city, state and zip code.
See page 281 for details.

Spice World

New Title Screen, Big Spice Girls and New Dance Moves

New Title Screen: After choosing a girl from the "dancing" Title Screen, go to the screen where the girl is standing on the planet. Now hold the Start button and press Circle, Triangle, Triangle, Circle. You will hear a cheer. Let go of the buttons and press L1+R1+L2+R2+ Start+Select at the same time. This will reset the machine and then show the Spice Girls covered up only by the backs of chairs!
Big Spice Girls: After choosing a girl from the "dancing" Title Screen, go



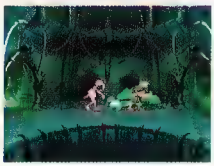


to the screen where the girl is standing on the planet. Now hold the Start button and press Circle, Square, Circle, Square.
New Moves: After choosing a girl from the "dancing" Title Screen, go to the screen where the girl is standing on the planet. Now hold the Start button and press Square, Triangle, Circle, Triangle. Now there will be new moves at the studio.

Heart of Darkness

All Levels and Cinemas

With the game off, make sure you have a controller in port 2. Now



hold down all four Shoulder buttons. Turn the game on and when you get to the Main Menu Screen, access the Options screen (while still holding the four buttons). From the Options, you'll go to the Treehouse. From there go to "Load Game" and you'll have access to all levels and cinemas!

Metal Gear Solid

Cheat Codes

To play as Solid Snake in a Tuxedo: you'll have to beat the game twice using your old save data to reload

new games. Then on the third game, Snake will change into his

tuxedo when he is on the elevator coming out of the dock.

Tenchu

Incredible Cheats

LEGEND: L = D-pad left, R= D-pad right, U = D-pad up, D = D-pad down, S = Square button, C = Circle button, T = Triangle button, X = X button

Increase Item Capacity to 99
On the Items Screen -
L, L, D, D, S, S, T, S while holding the L1 button.

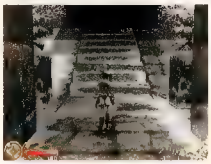
Unlock All Hidden Items
On the Items Screen -
L, L, D, D, S, S, T, C while holding the R1 button.

Increase Item Inventory
On the Items Screen -
L, L, D, D, S, S, T, X while holding the L2 button.

Restore Health
On the Pause Screen -
L, L, D, D, S, S, T, S.

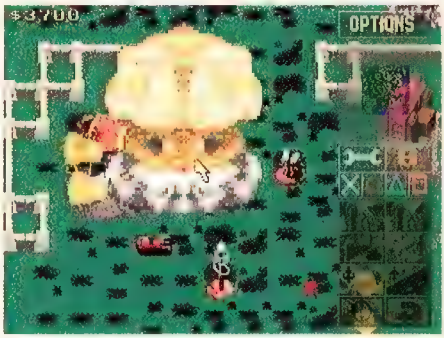
Unlock All Levels
On the Mission Select Screen -
L, L, D, D, S, S, T, S while holding the R2 button.

Enable Japanese Voice-Over
On the Mission Select Screen-
L, L, D, D, S, S, T, C while holding the L1 button.



Enable Enemy Layout Selection Screen
On the Mission Select Screen -
L, L, D, D, S, S, T, X while holding the R1 button.

Enable Ayame Sexy Armor
You must be playing as Ayame. At the Item Selection Screen with armor displayed as an option enter -
L, L, D, D, S, S, T, C.
If the command is entered successfully the number of available armor will drop from 1 to 0.



Command & Conquer: Red Alert Retaliation

Multiple Cheat Codes

In the middle of the game, press the Triangle button to bring up the sidebar. Now, move the cursor over the appropriate symbols (X, Circle, Triangle, Square) and key in each sequence with the Circle button to obtain the results as shown:

Win Mission:
Circle, Circle, Triangle, X, X, Square. This lets you automatically win the current level.

Lose Mission:
Circle, X, Circle, Square, Square, X. This makes you automatically lose the current level.

Unshroud:
Triangle, Triangle, X, Circle, Triangle, Square. This turns off the shroud so you can see everything in the level.

Mo' Money:
X, X, Square, Circle, Circle, Circle. This increases your money by $1,000 each time you enter the code.

Top 20 tricks

Each month we'll be bringing you all of the tricks that we have for games from last month's Top 20 lists.

1 Banjo-Kazooie (N64)

Hidden Puzzles/Secret Appearance Codes

You must first beat the game to do this trick. Go to Banjo's house and inside, walk up to the picture of the mole. Standing in front of the fireplace but not touching it, press Up-C and look up at the picture of Bottles the Mole. If done correctly, Bottles should speak and congratulate you on finding his hidden puzzle game. Now you must play through and win the puzzle game, and once you do, Bottles will give you a password. Exit the puzzle, look up at the picture again, and you will be given a different, harder puzzle. You can do this up to seven times and each time, you will get a new password. (Note: After the sixth puzzle, Bottles will tell you that there are no more games to play. Don't believe him. Look up at the picture once more and Bottles will say that there is one more puzzle to complete.) Here is a list of all the passwords and what they do:

BOTTLESBONUS - Big head Banjo
BOTTLESBONUSTWO - Big head and feet for Banjo
BOTTLESBONUSTHREE - Big Kazooie
BOTTLESBONUSFOUR - Tall and skinny Banjo
BOTTLESBONUSFIVE - Tall, skinny Banjo with big hands and feet
BIGBOTTLESBONUS - Big everything, including Kazooie
WISHYWASHYBANJO - The witch doctor turns Banjo into a washing machine.

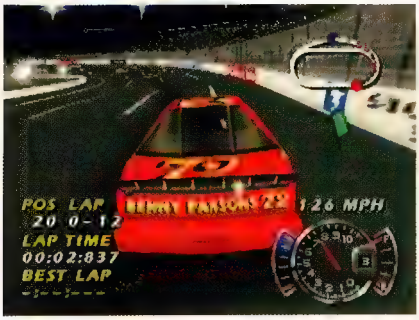
To make these codes work, exit Banjo's house and go to Treasure Trove Cove. Enter the puzzle-letter room and type out the codes by stomping on the letters. You cannot enter any of the codes shown unless you beat the puzzle game that gave you that actual code. To deactivate any codes, go to the puzzle-letter room and type in NOBONUS.

Parabomb:
X, X, X, Circle, Triangle, Square. This gives you the Parabomb weapon.
Nuke:
Circle, X, Circle, Circle, X, Square. This gives you the Nuke weapon.
Chrono:
Square, Circle, Triangle, X, Circle, Circle. Gives you the Chrono weapon in your inventory.
Iron Curtain:
Square, X, Circle, X, Triangle, Triangle. This gives you the Iron Curtain weapon in your inventory.
Civ. Names:
Square, Square, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Triangle. This replaces the generic "civilian" names with real names.
Soylent Green:
Square, X, Square, X, Square, X. This makes you harvest people instead of ore. Plug your ears from the screams!

NASCAR 99

Hidden Announcer

To play as the commentator, Benny Parsons, just follow this method: On the Main Menu Screen, choose a Single Race. On the Single Race Screen, move down to "Select Track." Now choose the Richmond Track. Now move up and highlight the Select Car Option. With this option highlighted, enter this code very quickly (within four seconds): Up-C, Right-C, Down-C, Left-C, Z, Z, Z, L button, Z, Z. The Benny Parsons car will now appear!



WWF Warzone

New Features and Modes

Random Wrestler:
On the Character Selection Screen, hold Up and press Block.
Taunt Your Opponent:
In the middle of a match press A+Left-C together. Or, for an alternate taunt, press B+Down-C together.

Access Dude Love and Cactus Jack:
Beat WWF Challenge on Normal with Mankind to unlock Cactus Jack and Dude Love.
Burp and Fart Mode:
Beat WWF Challenge with Mosh or Thrasher on any difficulty to get Burp and Fart Mode. Whenever you get hit or hit someone, you'll hear a burp or a fart!
No Meters:
Beat WWF Challenge with the Undertaker to disable the health meters.
Goldust's Extra Costumes:
Beat WWF Challenge on Normal with Goldust to get more costumes. Do a mirror match to see the different costumes.
Steve Austin's Extra Costumes:
Beat WWF Challenge with Steve Austin to get two more costumes for him. Do a mirror match to see the different costumes.
Extra Costume Accessories:
Beat WWF Challenge with Kane on any difficulty to get new masks, shirts, boots, etc.
Big Head Mode:
Beat WWF Challenge with the British Bulldog or Rocky Maivia. Everyone will now have a huge head!
Ego Mode:
Beat WWF Challenge with Ahmed Johnson. Now your wrestler's head will grow with every hit.
Ladies Night Mode:
Beat WWF Challenge with Triple H or Shawn Michaels to get access to female bodies in the Create-a-Wrestler Mode.
No Wimps Mode:
Beat WWF Challenge with Faarooq or Ken Shamrock to disable blocking.
Cool Reflections:
Beat WWF Challenge with any wrestler on any mode to turn the wrestler's shadows into full-color reflections.
Play as Sue:
Beat the Challenge with Owen or Bret Hart to access Sue (the ring girl).
Once you've opened one of the features or modes, press L, then the R button at the Main Menu Screen to move down to the basement. From here, you can access all of the cheats you've opened!

NFL Blitz

Codes and Hidden Players

Cheat Codes: On the Team Vs. Screen, enter any of these codes: with the Turbo, Jump and Pass buttons and then a direction on the control pad. Note: Some codes need to be entered by the second player as well, and are noted as such. Most of these codes work for the PlayStation version as well (The ones that don't are noted as such).

0-4-0-Up	Huge Head
1-1-1-Down	Tournament Mode (2P)
3-2-1-Left	No Head
1-2-3-Left	Super FG's
1-2-3-Right	Headless Team
0-1-0-Up	Late Hits
0-5-0-Right	Big Football
2-0-0-Right	Big Head
5-0-0-Left	No Stadium
1-5-1-Up	No Punting
4-3-3-Up	Invisible
2-1-2-Left	Clear Weather

Top 20 tricks cont.

2 WWF Warzone (PS)

Play as the Trainer and Big Head Mode

On the Main Menu Screen, press L1, R1 (it may take a few tries to get it to work). This will take you to the basement, where hidden characters and modes are accessed after they are unlocked. Here are two of them to get you started:
Wrestle as Training Mode wrestler:
Go to Training Mode and from the screen where you choose wrestlers, select "Custom" followed by "Trainer."
Big Head Mode:
Win the WWF title in Challenge Mode on the medium or hard difficulty level with British Bulldog.

3 Gran Turismo (PS)

Find Codes!

Can you find codes for this game? If you do, send them in! You can score a free game for the system of your choice!

4 Mission Impossible (N64)

Many Different Codes

Enter all of these codes during the Mission Select (level select) Screen:
Right-C, Left-C, Right-C, Down-C, R - *Gives you Uzi with 30 rounds.*
R, L, Left-C, Right-C, Down-C - *Gives you a Mini Rocket Launcher with 30 rockets.*
Up-C, L, Right-C, Left-C, Up-C - *Gives you 7.65 Silencer with 50 rounds.*
R, L, Down-C, Up-C, Up-C - *Gives you 9mm HI POWER with 30 rounds.*
After you enter a code correctly then you will hear Ethan say, "There, that's better."

5 Mortal Kombat 4 (PS)

Play As Meat

From the Main Menu, choose "Arcade" Mode. Now choose one-on-one Kombat. On the Fighter Select Screen, press Start on controller two. This will join in a second player. Now take controller one and move to the "Group" icon at the bottom of the screen. Choose this option and let player 2 choose his/her character. Now player 1 must defeat player 2. Then player 2 must press Start (at the Falling Screen) to continue. Repeat the same process on the Fighter Select Screen with player 1 choosing the group select, and player 2 choosing a character. You will notice that player 1 will be playing as a different character in succession each time you do this. Keep doing this process until you reach the last character in the Fighter Select Screen (Sonya). After the Group Select chooses her and you defeat player 2, have player 2 continue and go back to the Fighter Select Screen again. Now have player 1 choose any character (not from the Group select this time). Meat will appear in place of your chosen fighter. He will have the same moves as the fighter you chose from the Select Screen. As long as you continue, you can play as Meat with any other character.

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20 tricks

6 Mortal Kombat 4 (N64)

Alternate Costumes
To get alternate costumes, first go to the Character Select Screen. Go to the character you want to select but before selecting him/her, hold Start and press the Up-C button. When the Yin Yang symbol starts spinning, wait until a voice says, "Excellent!" or "Outstanding," etc. That means you have the second color. To get the third costume, do it again and the Yin Yang will spin again but this time you'll have the third color costume. Most likely, the third costume will look the same as the original, but you will have a new weapon. There is even a fourth costume if you do the code again, and you will get an alternate weapon with this costume.

7 GoldenEye 007 (PS)

31 Extra Characters
On the Multiplayer Options Screen, go to the Characters Option and move to your last available character, which will be Mishkin or Moonraker Elite. Now hold the L+R buttons and press Left-C, left go and hold L button and press Up-C, left Go and hold L+R buttons and press Left (control pad), hold L button and press Right (control pad), hold R button and press Down (control pad), hold L+R button and press Left-C, hold L button and press Up-C, hold L+R button and press Right (control pad), hold L+R button and press Down-C, hold L button and press Down (control pad). Now you will see that you can select from a number of new characters (31 to be exact)!

8 NFL Xtreme (PS)

Player Alterations
From the Main Menu Screen, choose the Rosters Option. In the Rosters Screen, choose "Create Free Agent." On the CreateFreeAgent Menu, enter the following first and last names for the results as shown:

MONKEY MICKY - All players have huge arms.
TINY TOM - All players are tiny.
BIGHEAD BOBBY - All players have big heads.

9 Road Rash 3D (PS)

Double Damage Facing Forward
In any race, hold the L2 button and you'll get the far view. While holding this, press and hold the R2 button. Holding both of these buttons while racing will give you double the damage for your hits without looking backward!

10 Tekken 3 (PS)

Find Codes!
Can you find codes for this game? If you do, send them in! You can score a free game for the system of your choice!

5-3-4-Down		Lights Out (not on PS)
5-2-5-Down		Weather: Snow
0-3-2-Left		Fast Turbo Running
0-0-1-Down		Show FG%
0-1-2-Down		No CPU Assistance (2P)
0-3-0-Down		Fog on (not on PS)
0-4-1-Down		Thick Fog (not on PS)
3-1-4-Down		Smart CPU
4-2-3-Down		No Random Fumbles
2-0-3-Right		Big Heads (team)
2-1-0-Up		No First Downs
1-4-1-Right		Big Players
3-1-0-Right		Mall Players
1-1-5-Left		No Play Selection (2P)
0-4-5-Up		Super Blitzing
2-5-0-Left		Fast Passes
2-1-1-Left		Allows Out Of Bounds
5-1-4-Up		Infinite Turbo
2-3-3-Up		Power-up Teammates
3-1-2-Left		Power-up Blockers
4-2-1-Up		Power-up Defense
0-2-1-Right		Show More Field (2P)
1-0-2-Right		Hide Receiver Name
4-0-4-Left		Power-up Speed (2P)
2-2-2-Right		Night Game
5-5-5-Right		Weather: Rain
5-5-5-Up		Hyper Blitz
3-4-4-Up		No Interceptions

Hidden Players: When asked to Enter a Name for Record Keeping, choose "Yes." Now enter one of the names shown below and the pin number to access the following players. You will know that you entered them correctly if you hear the announcer say, "Lights out, baby!"

Turmel	0322	Mark Turmell
Sal	0201	Sal Divita
Jason	3141	Jason Skiles
Jenifr	3333	Jennifer Hedrick
Daniel	0604	Dan Thompson
Japple	6660	Jeff Johnson

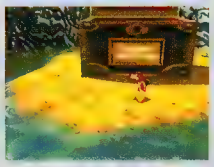
Root	6000	John Root
Luis	3333	Luis Mangubat
Mike	3333	Mike Lynch
Gentil	1111	Jim Gentile
Brain	1111	Brain
Forden	1111	Dan Forden
Skull	1111	Skull
Caritn	1111	Headless Guy
Shinok	8337	Shinnok from MK.
Raiden	3691	Raiden from MK.

Other Secret Players: Enter these codes the same way as the ones above.

Thug	1111
Van	1234
Billz	0526
Zz	1221
Jimk	5651
Marka	1112
Ed	3246
Todd	1122
Mitch	4393
John	5158
Josh	4288
Ryan	029
Beth	7761
Brian	0818
Grinch	2220
Paulo	0517
Lt	7777
Nico	4440
Gatson	1111
Guido	6765
Rog	8148
Monty	1836
Shun	0530
Gene	0310
Paula	0425
Dbn	6969

Banjo-Kazooie

Cheat Codes
First, start a new game or access a saved game. Go to Treasure Trove Cove without changing at Mumbo's hut in Mumbo's Mountain.



Get to the Sand Castle, then enter the word CHEAT on the floor tiles. You will hear a mooing sound for each letter of CHEAT you enter. Next, enter one of the following codes on the floor right after you enter the CHEAT letters. You will not hear any confirmation sound until you finish each code:

BANJOBEGSFORPLENTYOFEGGS
(Infinite eggs)
LOTSOFGOESWITHMANYBANJOS
(Infinite lives)
DONTBEADUMBOGOSEEMUMBO
(99 Mumbo tokens)
NOWYOUCANFLYHIGHINTHESKY
(Infinite red feathers)
GIVETHEBEARLOTSOFAIR
(Infinite underwater air)
ANENERGYBARTOGETYOUFAR
(Maximum honeycombs)
AGOLDENGLOWTOPROTECTBANJO
(Infinite gold feathers)

Note: You must learn the wonderwing in Clanker's Cavern before entering the gold feathers code. Also, the "CHEAT" code may not work in all circumstances of all

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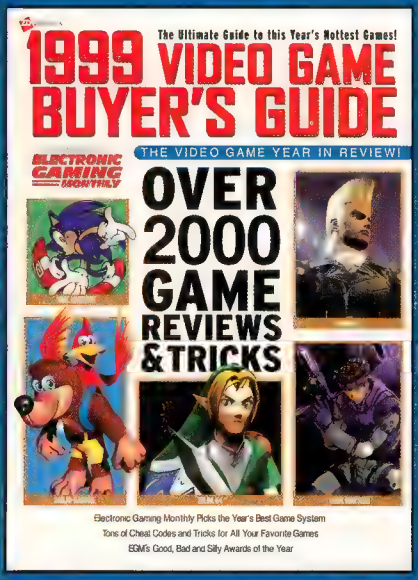
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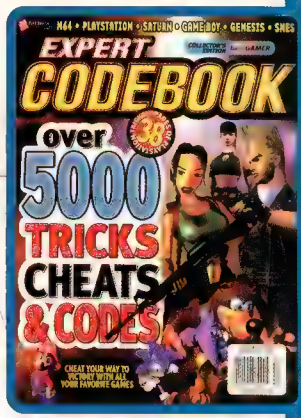
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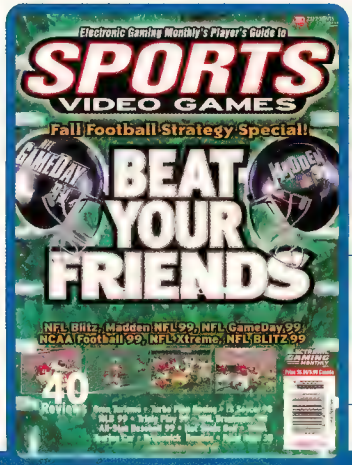
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ON SALE 12/1/98

Find one for sure at: Software Etc., Babbages, K mart, Wal-Mart, Electronics Boutique, Waldenbooks, Target, Borders, Crown Books, Barnes & Noble

Top 20 tricks cont.

11 MLB Featuring Ken Griffey Jr. (N64)

Angels in the Outfield
After fielding the ball on any play, run to any base except first base. Throw the ball around the bases in this order: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, Home, 3rd, 2nd, Home, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, Home. On the next play where the batter hits the ball to the outfield, have your fielder do a running dive with button A, but not toward the ball. Your fielder will leap into the air and stay there! Press A to swim flap your arms and B to swim through the air with your feet. If you let go of the controls for a little while, he will land.

12 Quest 64 (N64)

Find Codes!
Can you find codes for this game? If you do, send them in! You can score a free game for the system of your choice!

13 Super Mario 64 (N64)

Find Yoshi
The first requirement you have to achieve is to collect all 120 stars in the game. Once this has been done, proceed to the outside of the castle. The grate near the pond will now be open and a cannon will be there. Fire yourself onto the roof of the castle and there, wandering around aimlessly, will be Yoshi. Talk to him to receive 100 lives and a new Triple Jump!

14 Mario Kart 64 (N64)

Mirror Tracks
You must earn a gold cup in every course you race. Do this for every class (50cc, 100cc and 150cc) and you'll get a new Title Screen. Plus, a Mirror Mode option will now appear under the 150cc option. All of the tracks in the game will now be reversed!

15 All-Star Baseball 99 (N64)

Alien Abductors Team
On the Main Setup Screen, move down to the Enter Cheats option and access it. On the Enter Cheats Screen, enter the code, ATEMYBUIK. Then press Start. You will see words appear below the code saying, "Let the Abductions Begin." Now go to the Game Setup Screen and access the Stadium Select option. Scroll down until you reach the last stadium; Alienapolis Park. Choose this stadium and begin a new exhibition game. Your team will be replaced by an alien team called The Abductors!

saved games. Make sure you enter the word CHEAT every time before putting in any of these codes.

GameShark Codes

PlayStation Codes:

AZURE DREAMS
Infinite Money
80012d5cffff
80012d5e05ff
Infinite Health in Battle
800834e0ffff
Quick Level Up
800834d0ffff

C&C RETALIATION
Infinite Funds for Allies
d00101240000
8002a3d4ffff
Infinite Funds for Soviets
d00101240000
8002a798ffff

FUTURE COP: L.A.P.D.
Infinite Ammo
8006bc782400
Red Team 999 Points in Precinct
Assault 801fbf6003e7
Red Team 0 Points in Precinct
Assault 801fbf600000
Blue Team 999 Points in Precinct
Assault 801fbf6403e7
Blue Team 0 Points in Precinct
Assault 801fbf640000

MADDEN NFL '99
Home Team Score 0
8006a32e0000
Away Team Score 0
8006cdee0000
Away Team Tiburon
800616ac0069
Away Team EA Sports
800616ac006a
Home Team Tiburon
800616ae0069
Home Team EA Sports
800616ae006a
Infinite Creation Points
80095caa2400

MEGA MAN LEGENDS
Infinite Zenny
800c1b2c423f
800c1b2e000f
Infinite Health
800b521e00c4

NFL BLITZ
Infinite Turbo Home
8017204a0064
Infinite Turbo Away
8017206a0064
No Turbo Home
8017204a0000
No Turbo Away
8017206a0000
Huge Head
80099c140001
Big Ball
80099ba00001
Hide Receiver Name
80099ba40001
No First Downs
80099c100001
Rain
80099ba80001
Night Game
80099bb00001
Invisible
80099c200001
Headless
80099c500001
Team Headless
80099bb40001
Big Players
80099b980001
Big Head
80099b900001
Team Big Head
80099b940001
Step Out Of Bounds
80099c440001
Fast Turbo Running
80099c340001
Snow
80099be40001
Turn Off Stadium
80099c280001

PARASITE EVE
Maximum AT Points
800b8a30ffff
Quick Level Gain
8009cfe8ffff
Maximum Item Slots
800c0e0c0032

Start With SMG
d00a76bc03e8
800c0e500067

SPYRO
Infinite Lives
8007582c0009
Infinite Health
80078bbc0003
Infinite Lives (Crash Demo)
800aaeb06300

TOCA CHAMPIONSHIP RACING
1 Lap To Win (Single Race Mode)
800b6d6c0040
1 Lap To Win (Championship Mode)
800b68bc0040
Access All Levels
300100b80009
Enable Tank
300100b50001
Turn Off Collision Detection
300100c40001
Enable Helicopter View
300100cc0001
Enable Go-Kart View
300100bd0001
Enable Night Mode
300100be0001
Enable Cartoon Mode
300100bf0001
Disco Fog Mode
300100c80001

Nintendo 64 Codes:

BOMBERMAN HERO
Infinite Lives
801652430009
Infinite Health
801652440004
Full Bomb Power

Trickman's Reference Guide

To order these awesome back issues see the ad on page 287.

Issue 107
1080° Snowboarding (N64)
Auto Destruct (PS)
Duke Nukem 3D (SAT)
Gex: Enter the Gecko(PS)
Pitfall 3D (PS)
Quake 64 (N64)
Skullmonkeys (PS)
Snowboard Kids (PS)
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Issue 108
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Road Rash 3D (PS)
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Issue 111

CART World Series (PS)
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TurboProp Racing (PS)
WarGame: Defcon 1 (PS)
World Cup 98 (PS

Issue 112

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NFL Xtreme (PS)
NFL Quarterback Club '98 (PS)
NHL Breakaway '98 (PS)
Pocket Fighter (PS)
Resident Evil 2 (PS)
TOCA (PS)
Turbo Prop Racing (PS)
WarGames: Defcon 1 (PS)
World Cup 98 (N64)

Top 20 tricks

16 Triple Play 99 (PS)

In-Game Cheats

To get these cheats to work, you must press and hold all four of the top buttons (L1+L2+R1+R2) while doing the code. Enter any of these when you are in the game.
Cheat Homerun - Triangle, Square, Triangle, Circle, X, Square, Left, Right
Cheat Strike Out - Up, Down, Triangle, Square, Triangle, Circle, X, Square

17 Tomb Raider (PS)

Level Skip

To access the Level Skip, just begin playing your game and then press the Select button. While in the Inventory Screen, enter the code: L2, R2, L2, Circle, Triangle, L1, R2 and L2. Now, when you return to your game, you should then proceed to the next level of the game.

18 Crash Bandicoot (PS)

Ultimate Password

Enter this code at the Password screen to access every level of in the game: Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, X, Square, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Square, X, Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Circle, Square, Triangle, X, X, X, X

19 MLB 99 (PS)

Find Codes!

Can you find codes for this game? If you do, send them in! You can score a free game for the system of your choice!

20 Vigilante 8 (PS)

Vehicle Code

Hidden Vehicles–From the Main Menu Screen, access the Options. Choose Game Status and then press the Circle button for the passcode. Enter this password: WMNNWLHTSCUCLH. After pressing X, all of the vehicles will be revealed in Arcade Mode, including the '64 Luxo Saucer.

8016523f0003
Full Fire Power
801652400008
Extra Gems
d01652410004
Extra Gems
80165241004b
Press GS Button For All OD
Bombs 8805749500ff
Press GS Button For All OD
Bombs 8805749600ff
Press GS Button For All OD
Bombs 8805749700ff

GEX 64

Infinite Lives
800c56b70005
Infinite Health
800c56bb0005
Have All Artifacts
800c56bf0063
800c56c30063
800c56c70063

IGGY'S RECKIN' BALLS

Infinite Credits
800bdea50005
Always Have 99 Points
810d8ee00063
Extra Characters
810c632effff
Enable All Courses
810ccdf20b00
810ccdf40b00
810ccdf60b00

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE

Infinite Health
810862b2ffff
Turbo Mode
800899c80001
Big Hands, Head And Feet
800892a10005
Kid Mode
800892a10007

MYSTICAL NINJA

Infinite Health
8015c5e70028
Infinite Lives
8015c5ef0009
Infinite Ryo (Money)
8115c5ea270f

NASCAR 99

1 Lap to Race
800438b30009
d021fbab0000
8021fbab0008
d022359b0000
8022359b0008

NFL BLITZ

Home Team Score 50
802adf4f0032
Away Team Score 50
802adf570032
Infinite Turbo Home Team
812add9842c8
Infinite Turbo Away Team
812add6c42c8
Huge Head P1
802997cb0001
Headless Team P1
8029977b0001
Late Hits P1
802997cf0001
No First Downs
802997c70001
Night Game
802997770001
Weather: Snow
802997a30001
Weather: Rain
8029976f0001
P1 is Jenifr
812ae0440000
812ae0460006
P1 is Shinok
812ae0440000
812ae046000b
P1 is Thug
812ae0440000
812ae046000d
Infinite Turbo P1 & P2
802997bb0003
Invisible P1
802997d70001
Team Big Players P1
8029975f0001
Thick Fog
802997970001
Turn Off Stadium
802997db0001
Lights Out
802997a70001
P1 is Raiden
812ae0440000
812ae0460009
P1 is Skull
812ae0440000
812ae046000c

YOSHI'S STORY

Must Be On
de0004000032
Infinite Health Dark Blue Yoshi
800f8dc30008
Infinite Health Light Blue Yoshi
800f8dc70008
Infinite Health Pink Yoshi
800f8dcb0008
Infinite Health Yellow Yoshi
800f8dbf0008
Infinite Health Red Yoshi
800f8dbb0008
Infinite Health Green Yoshi
800f8db70008
Infinite Health White Yoshi
800f8dcf0008
Infinite Health Black Yoshi
800f8dd30008
Infinite Lives (All Yoshis)
800f8df700ff

Contest Rules: 1. **No Purchase Necessary:** To enter, send a letter or standard size postcard with your best trick codes for any video game to "Tricks of the Trade," 1920 Highland Avenue, Suite 222, Lombard, Illinois 60148, or e-mail us at tricks@zd.com. Be sure to include your name, address, and phone number. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. Entries must be received by Sept. 20, 1998. All entries become exclusive property of Sponsors and will not be acknowledged or returned. Sponsors assume no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due, or misdirected entries. Sponsors reserve the right to cancel this contest at any time with appropriate notice. Only one prize per family, organization, or household per issue. Winning entries may be printed in EGM and/or EGM². 2. **Prizes:** First Prize winners will have their name and trick displayed in the magazine and will receive a video game cartridge selected by Sponsor. First Prize has an approximate retail value of $60.00. The best trick submitted by the First Prize winners will be declared the Grand Prize Winner. One Grand Prize winner will receive (in addition to the First Prize awards) one (1) Game Shark. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of $99.95. Winners will be selected by a judging panel whose decisions are final. Winners shall be selected from all valid entries received. Entries shall be judged on the following criteria: (1) Uniqueness (25%); (2) Novelty (25%); (3) Accuracy (25%); and (4) Originality (25%). Judging to be held on or about Sept. 25, 1998. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Sponsors should the featured prizes become unavailable. 3. **Odds of Winning:** The number of winners and the odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received. 4. **Eligibility:** Contest open to residents of United States and Canada, void in Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within five days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade, or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of ZD Inc., InterAct Accessories and their respective affiliates are not eligible. Neither ZD Inc., InterAct Accessories nor their respective affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions, or related companies are responsible for any damages, taxes, or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. Winners accepting prizes agree that all prizes are awarded on the condition that ZD Inc., InterAct Accessories and their agents, representatives, and employees will have no liability whatsoever for any injuries, losses, or damages of any kind resulting from acceptance, possession, or use of the prizes. 5. **Winners List:** For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope identifying the month for which the winners list is requested to "Tricks of the Trade Winners List," 1920 Highland Avenue Suite 222, Lombard, Illinois 60148. Requests for winners lists must be received by the 15th day of next month following the on-sale date of the publication. Allow four weeks for delivery of winners list. 6. **Restrictions:** Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply. 7. **Sponsors:** This contest is sponsored by ZD Inc. and InterAct Accessories, Inc. ©1998 ZD Inc. All Rights Reserved. Printed in USA.

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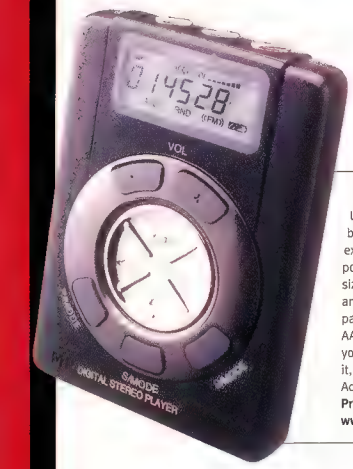
Cool Places
New Media

Get Some!

Cool stuff you could probably live without, but shouldn't



Hello Droids, Goodbye Cash!

If you have a good-paying job and have been driving a junker for the past five years, you should be able to afford these exact replicas of R2 and C3PO. On a five-year loan, the monthly payments work out to be only $300!
Price: $7,200 (R2D2) $7,500 (C3PO)
www.faoschwartz.com

MP3 Is For Me

Until now, portable MP3 players have been cumbersome at best and rather expensive. Enter: Diamond's Rio. This portable MP3 player (which is about the size of a standard cassette tape) holds an hour's worth of songs, has no moving parts, and plays for 12 hours on just one AA battery. Hook this amazing device to your PC, download some MP3 files onto it, and hit the road -with no skipping! Additional memory is also available.
Price: $199
www.diamondmm.com

Let's Hook Up and Jam!!

Plug JAM!! into your computer monitor and presto, you have another television you can play videogames on. In fact, you can also plug in your computer's multimedia speakers and rock it out. In addition, the picture quality is excellent thanks to the extra resolution of the computer monitor—it allows you to see every detail of your console game right down to the pixel.
Price: Around $80 **www.aimslab.com**

Evil in a Paperback

If you're a die-hard fan of Resident Evil and want another item to add to your collection of RE memorabilia, check out these books from Pocket Books. But keep in mind: The books aren't on the same level as *War and Peace*.

Price: $6.50 **www.amazon.com**

McFarlane's Maniacs

There's something about Todd McFarlane and horror that just clicks. Hence, the Movie Maniacs series from McFarlane toys. A good number of your favorite horror-movie freaks will be available sometime in October, including Freddy, Jason and Leatherface. The figures stand roughly 7" tall and come with deadly accessories.

Price: Around $8

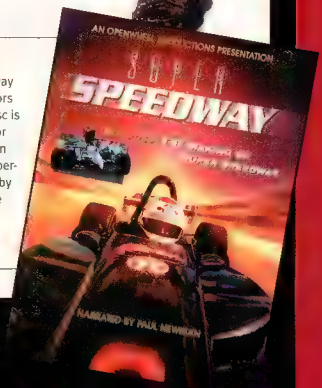
www.spawn.com

Pure Speed on DVD

Narrated by Paul Newman, Super Speedway IMAX is said to have the most vibrant colors and impressive sound yet on DVD. The disc is considered a sort of reference standard for DVD. Super Speedway virtually puts you in the cockpit of a car traveling at 230 mile-per-hour speeds—an experience usually had by professional drivers only. Many of us have this movie, and it is incredible.

Price: Around $30

www.imax.com or **www.laserviews.com**



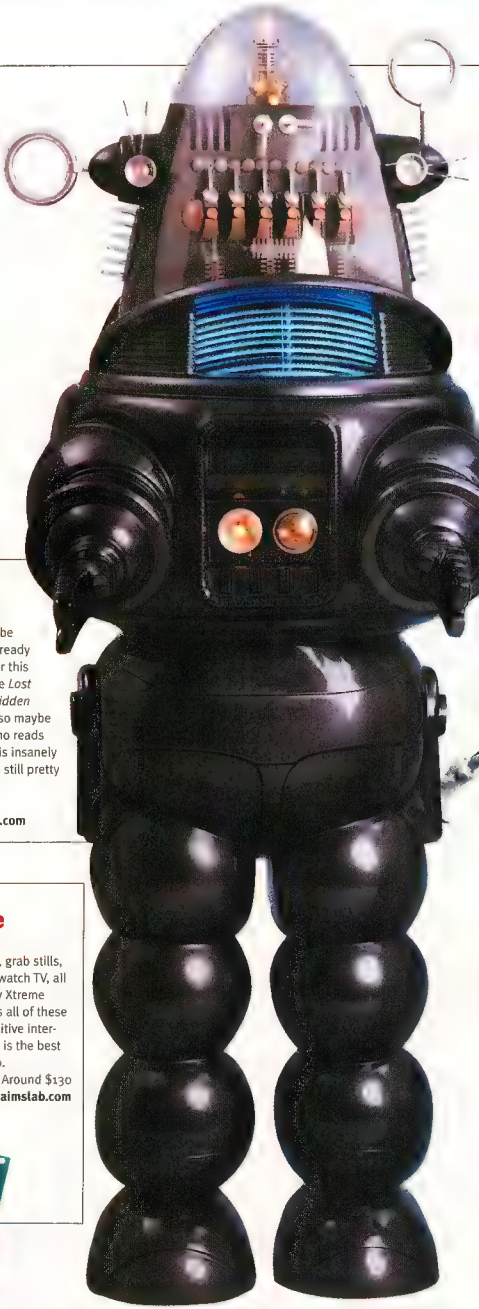
Get Some!

Freaky and Fun Furby

Cross a Tomagatchi with Gizmo the Gremlin and you have a Furby, the newest in the long line of virtual pets from Tiger Electronics. Furby speaks his own "Furbish" language but can also be taught English. The creature can speak up to 200 words in Furbish and English, which can be combined for a total of 800-phrase combinations! Furby will wiggle his ears, dance, open and close his eyes and move his beak when he speaks. Furby can also share knowledge with your friend's Furbies. Yeah, it's a little freaky but it's still cool. And really, who needs cloning when you have these weird animals?

Price: $30

www.tigertoys.com



Danger, Danger!

That's what you'll be screaming as you ready your credit card for this exact replica of the *Lost in Space* and *Forbidden Planet* robot. OK, so maybe not one person who reads *EGM* can afford this insanely priced 'bot but it's still pretty damned cool.

Price: $30,000

www.faoschwartz.com

Get on the Highway

Capture and edit video, grab stills, listen to the radio and watch TV, all with the Video Highway Xtreme from AIMS Lab. Besides all of these capabilities and an intuitive interface, the Xtreme's price is the best feature—a measly $130.

Price: Around $130

www.aimslab.com

Mini-Disc At a Mini-Pricepoint

Mini-disc: A cool format that usually has a high price attached to it. Not this time. Sony's MD5 bundle includes a home player/recorder, portable player and two 60-minute discs. The incredibly priced MD5 bundle is the best way to get into this high-quality digital format this holiday season.
Price: Around $400 **www.sel.sony.com**

Lara and Turok, Together Again

Other Lara Croft action figures we've seen are pretty lame. It's a shame considering how much of a hottie she is...you know, for a videogame babe. Luckily, the Croft line from Playmates toys featuring an assortment of 9" Laras in various poses is looking pretty good. In addition, Playmates is releasing a number of Turok figures including a diorama and several 5" figures, including Joshua Fireseed, Primagen and Adon. Look for them in December.
Price: Around $20 for Lara figures, $7-15 for Turok figures
www.playmatestoys.com

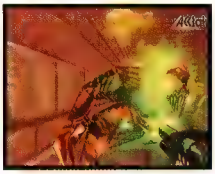
by Crispin Boyer
crispin_boyer@zd.com

The Final Word

Secret Weapons in the Console War

Pssst. Wanna hear a secret? Despite the ubiquitous hype surrounding the system, not everyone is gonna buy a Dreamcast the very day it hits the shelves. Yes, Sega's 64-Bit superconsole will be the most powerful home system in the history of everything, and, yes, the early adopters among you are sure to leap on that thing like '70s Elvis on a fried peanut-butter-and-'nana sandwich. But as cheap as the system's supposed to be, 200 bucks is still 200 bucks—and that's before you even start dishing out for Dreamcast games. Not every gamer has that kinda coin to toss at a brand-new console, especially if they're already spending $100 or so a month to get their PlayStation or N64 gaming fix.

So a few of you are understandably a little nervous about the Dreamcast's looming launch in Japan and U.S. release next fall. You want state-of-the art gaming hardware, but the day-to-day, wallet-draining realities of life—rent, tuition, the electric bill, clean underwear—can dent your pursuit of the next big thing. I know; I faced a similar dilemma back when the Super NES came out in my dirt-poor college days.



Are hi-res graphics worth $30? Yep. Wait till you see Turok 2.

But just 'cause your pockets won't be deep enough to import or buy a Dreamcast doesn't mean you're resigned to console obsolescence. Sony and Nintendo aren't about to sulk in the corner while Sega slaps their systems in the face with one spectacular Dreamcast screenshot and tech spec after another. And I'm talking about more than marketing high jinks here. For the first time in videogame history, two consoles are pulling out significant, cost-effective and—most importantly—sure-to-be-successful weapons deep into their lifespan.

Nintendo's upcoming big gun in the console wars is hardly a secret weapon. The 4-Meg pak, apparently the sole survivor of the 64DD program, is the best thing that can happen to the system and its owners. When it hits on Nov. 24, this $30 gizmo will bring the graphics in Turok 2, Rogue Squadron, NFL Quarterback Club 99 and several other soon-to-launch titles up to the hi-res visual standards of 3D-accelerated PC games. But don't take my word for it. "In the future, we can use the additional RAM in part to create better overall graphics, more textures and possibly additional sound or voice enhancements," Steve Dauterman, director of development for LucasArts, said. "All of these things can only lead to better and better looking and sounding games."

But then you already knew all that if you've been keeping up with our coverage of the 4-Meg pack. What isn't so well known is how Sony intends to keep their 3-year-old system from showing its age. The secret here lies in a small chunk of the PS development kit called the PlayStation Analyzer (PA). This recent addition to the dev.-kit hardware helps programmers squeeze every drop of power out of the PlayStation's CPU, coprocessors and memory until they've achieved a 100 percent-efficient 3D engine. (Actually, the PA has been available for three years, but there were only three in the world and developers needed an appointment with Sony to use one. Now, they're a standard component of the development kit.)

Programmers activate the PA with a foot pedal (so, to passers-by, it looks like mind control), which prompts the PA to display exactly what each part of the PlayStation is doing in time steps up to a millionth of a second—and in color-coded histograms that can zoom in and out without loss of information. At its furthest zoom (seeing the whole of a gametum on screen at once), developers can see exactly how much work the polygon-drawing hardware (the GPU) is doing compared to the processor. "The perfect game would have both running to capacity, with neither waiting for the other," explains Mike Diskett, formally of Bullfrog and now president of U.K.-based Mucky Foot, which is developing the PlayStation 3D beat-'em-up Urban Chaos. "So the PA lets you tweak the code until it as nearly as possible reaches this state of perfection. The PA easily doubled the speed of Urban Chaos on the PS after just three weeks of use."

This hardware also lets developers achieve minimum polygon overwrite and even freeze games right at glitches, making bug killing a breeze. And if you needed any more proof that the PA is a good thing, get this: Gran Turismo was reportedly the first game to benefit from its use.

Of course, the ultimate trick up the current machines' sleeves is—strange as it may sound—their age. Developers with hands-on time aplenty are now keenly comfortable with programming games for them, and we're finally seeing titles that push the systems to their limits (MGS, anyone?). Sure, these limits are a far cry from what we're seeing of the Dreamcast's launch games. But the RAM-cart-supporting N64 games and third-generation PlayStation titles will at least be pretty enough to keep die-hard gamers happy until they've scraped together enough pennies to buy a Dreamcast.

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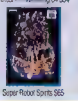

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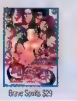

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From Capcom, the world's creator of the most popular video game series, comes "Marvel vs. Street Fighter" the sequel to "X-Men vs. Street Fighters. This amazing and powerful fighting game is long awaited for the Sega Saturn. You can choose from all your favorite Street Fighter or Marvel Comic heroes and battle it out using super combos and fierce fireball and laser beams. If you think you've play the ultimate fighting game, well think again

Capcom Generation 2
GHOST & GOBLIN GHOST & GHOULS

One of Capcom's most popular side-scrolling adventure series ever is back to haunt even the bravest of knights in Capcom's Ghost & Goblin series. Capcom Generation unleashes the entire trilogy of challenging classics; Ghost & Goblin, Ghouls & Ghosts and Super Ghouls & Ghosts on one disc. Play as the gallant knight, Arthur, as he battles throngs of zombies, monsters and other terrors of the night while trying to save the beautiful princess.

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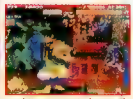
SNK Fighting Collections

SAMURAI SPIRITS BEST COLLECTION

Samurai Showdown III & Samurai Showdown IV



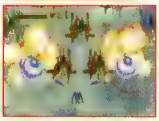
Samurai Showdown, the second game of the series to be available for the Sega Saturn, and it is now being released as part of SNK's classics series. The game is beautifully animated, its graphics are clean and drawn in the "anime" style. It features many different gameplay so it is never boring

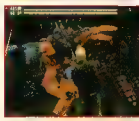
REAL BOUT FATAL FURY BEST COLLECTION

Real Bout & Real Bout Special

This one of SNK's best known and hot-selling 2D fighting game which is being released as part of SNK's classic. This game features awesome combos, trademark animation and countless fighters

Introducing Radiant Silvergun, the newest vertical shooter from Treasure, the company known for their innovative gameplay and best selling games such as Contra. Radiant Silvergun has been a popular arcade game in Japan since April, and is now available for Saturn. This newly released title features characters animated by the artists who designed Guardian Heroes, this is a truly unique 2 person, 2D shooter.



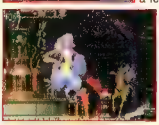


DEEP FEAR

Introducing "Deep Fear", the hottest Saturn game in Japan. This underwater adventure game, features the same type of elements that made "Resident Evil" a best seller. The adventure begins when a Top Secret Nuclear Submarine crashes into a Top Secret Marine Base. When a search and rescue operation is dispatched, all hell breaks loose. Victims begging to be killed moments before they are transformed into monsters. It all adds up to an incredible adventure, the likes of which have rarely been seen on the Sega Saturn

Dracula X

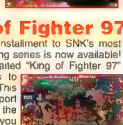
This wonderfully developed side scrolling game has been much enhanced for the Saturn. It will include a new character, as well as a few 3D tricks thrown in for good measure. Gameplay is made more exciting by the addition of two new wings to Dracula's castle, the "Underground Cavern" and the "Poisonous Plant Ridge". This is a game that will fully take advantage of the Saturn's 3D capabilities. **For the Sega Saturn.**

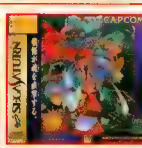


X-Men vs. Street Fighter

Faster & Better Than PSX Version!

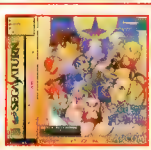
Gamers have been awaiting for this hot arcade game to be released for the Saturn, and it's finally available and with the 4 meg ram cart it's a dream come true. Just like the arcade





Vampire Savior

The most exciting fighter for the Saturn, a perfect translation of the arcade. With the added advantage of a 4 meg ram cartridge, there are almost no loading times and best of all once you beat the game you can access an option that will let you play it in English! This is fighting at its ultimate



Pocket Fighter

Introducing Pocket Fighter. The home version of the arcade game featuring diminutive versions of several of Capcom's best known video game characters. Such as Morigan from Darkstalkers, Ryu and Chun Li from Street Fighter as well as other characters from Capcom games

King of Fighter 97

The newest installment to SNK's most popular fighting series is now available! The long awaited "King of Fighter 97" finally comes to the Saturn! This japanese import is full of all the elements you know and love

Metal Slug

Metal Slug is another one of SNK's best known and hot-selling 2D side shooting game. This game features awesome graphics trademark animation and countless weapons. There are numerous challenging levels and bosses to destroy and defeat.

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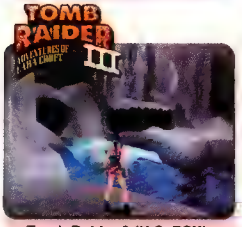

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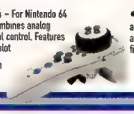

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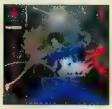

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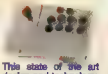

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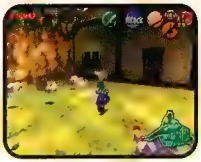
Next Month



EGM picks the top 50 trends, games, gadgets and developers to watch for in the coming year. Check out Furby!!

South Park gaming? *EGM* gets the inside track on Acclaim's newest title for the N64.

Ready...set...cheat! *EGM*'s next installment of our How-to series shows gamers how to better their personal game through unconventional means.

Did Zelda keep a smile on the faces of the review crew? Or was it a letdown to the continuing line? *EGM* critiques the latest cart clad in gold next month.

Are you wondering what's hot for the next year? *EGM*'s Slick 50 of games, gadgets and developers will show you what's on the up for the next year.

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY™

January 1999

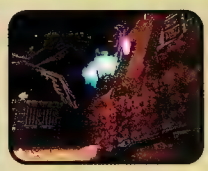
The Review Crew tackles the 64-Bit brainchild of Miyamoto—Zelda 64.

On sale Dec. 8

"Prepare to eat yellow snow, children!" The disturbed characters of South Park have the solution for post-holiday boredom this year.

EXPERT GAMER™

Who says children shouldn't play with dead things? In *XG*'s MediEvil guide, we prove that it's downright fun!



With more dangerous things to blast, you'll need our first hands-on guide to Turok 2: Seeds of Evil.

December 1998

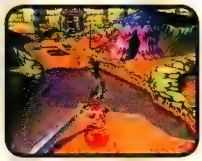
On sale Nov. 24

Do you have what it takes to beat Zelda 64? If not, *XG*'s guide has plenty of helpful suggestions!

Expert Gamer has the gift for you this holiday season: an awesome first-look guide on two of the hottest games, Zelda 64 and Turok 2. *XG* played the heck outta these games to provide the best strategy tips for you.

And as an extra holiday bonus, our December issue contains a mega end-of-the-year Tricks section. All of the coolest tricks gamers could ever want will be in this issue!

Although our hero might be rotting, *XG*'s MediEvil guide will have your gameplay smelling like roses—maps, Boss tips, puzzle suggestions, etc. are all included.



Twisted Metal fans will love our huge preview of 989 Studios' addition to the Twisted Metal series (left). And yes, Crash is back. See what *OPM* has to say about the mythical marsupial and his latest game Crash Bandicoot: WARPED (right).

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

December 1998

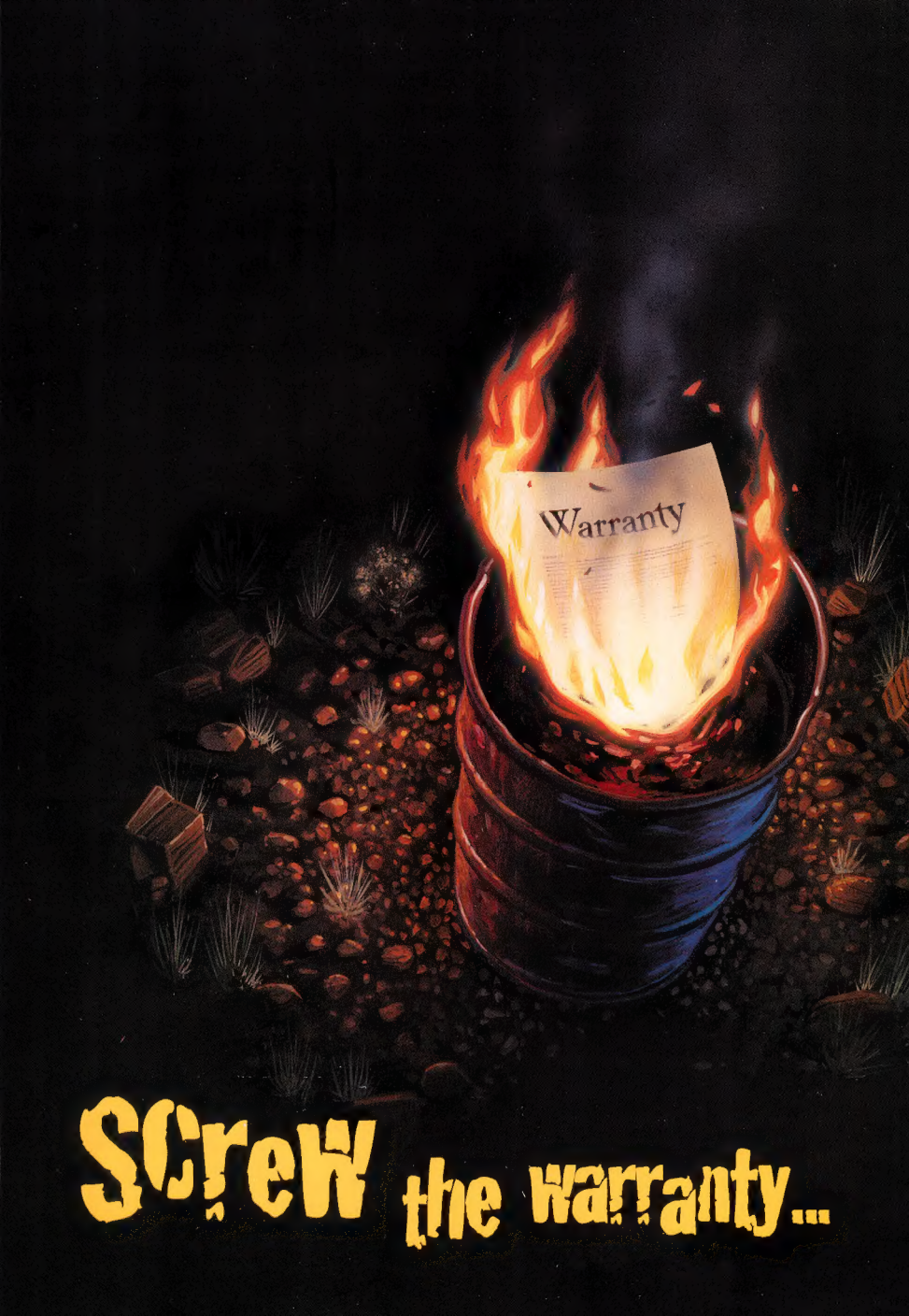
On sale Nov. 17

December promises to be ridiculously loaded with reviews that include a critique of the long-awaited Crash Bandicoot: WARPED (not to mention a playable demo to let you make your own judgement). Also look for reviews of notable games like Assault, Rally Cross 2, NHL 99, Wild 9 and Mr. Domino (See why you just can't stop him!).

Filling out the book will be hands-on test drives of Twisted Metal 3, NBA Live 99 (NBA strike permitting), Jackie Chan Stuntmaster and finally—Tiger Woods 99. And, we'll also pack in a complete Crash Bandicoot: WARPED strategy guide to get you through the game in style.

Go Mr. Domino, go! This addition to Acclaim's lineup could be the sleeper of the year. Find out why in *OPM*'s review.

*All editorial content is subject to change.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